

Queen: Jordan is voice of peace

AMMAN (J.T.) — Her Majesty Queen Noor has said the deterioration of relations between Jordan and the United States since the Gulf crisis erupted was tragic. Renter news agency, in a dispatch from London, quoted the Queen as saying, in an interview with British Broadcasting Corporation (BBC) television broadcast on Wednesday, Jordan had consistently been a voice of peace and moderation in the Middle East. "It's very, very tragic that relations between us (the United States and Jordan) have deteriorated considerably throughout this conflict," she said in the interview. Queen Noor said Jordan, "from the beginning of this conflict sought to promote a peaceful resolution... based on international law, international legitimacy, on U.N. resolutions."

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Civilians massacred in Baghdad

U.S.-led allies attack civilian bomb shelters, kill 500 Jordan goes into mourning in solidarity with Iraq

Combined agency dispatches

ALLIED MISSILES blasted a civilian shelter in the Iraqi capital in a night-time air raid Wednesday, turning the underground sanctuary into an inferno and killing at least 500 people hiding inside, the civil defence said.

Iraqi officials said the death toll could climb up to as many as 1,000. Rescuers were still clawing through the debris hours after the air raid, but an exact number of those who were inside when the aircraft struck was not known.

Civil defence workers said they dragged eight survivors from the rubble immediately after the two missiles hit the Al Ameriah shelter at 4 a.m. (0100 GMT). But later, they retrieved only bodies, most of them charred and mutilated beyond recognition.

Witnesses said first missile hit the entrance, jamming the only escape route. The second, moments later, penetrated the three-metre thick concrete roof and exploded inside the windowless shelter.

Reporters, who arrived at the scene with Iraqi Ministry of Health officials, found the firemen still fighting to control flames billowing from the tangled wreckage.

More than 40 charred bodies laid out on the ground at a time as dozens of ambulances shuttled in mortgaged and back, unable to cope with the

number.

As reporters watched, the decapitated body of a woman was pulled out and laid next to a small torso which apparently belonged to a girl whose head and limbs were blown off.

Residents of the middle-class Al Ameriah neighbourhood crowded the scene, looking for relatives and friends. Men beat on their chest and yelled "Allahu Akbar," and women cried hysterically.

A senior civil defence official said hundreds of people remained buried in the rubble several hours after the attack, and that there was no hope that any of them was still alive.

"There are no survivors there anymore. The fire is melting the metal. There's no way any human being could have survived until now," he said, requesting anonymity.

Health Minister Abdul Salam Muhammad Saeed told reporters that there were 1,000 people inside the shelter, one of five large sanctuaries built during the 1980-88 war against Iran. He called the attack "a well planned crime."

Other civil defence officials said an estimated 400 to 500 people had moved into the 12-metre-deep shelter, which can accommodate up to 2,000 people, since the allied bombing of Iraq began Jan. 17.

But because of allied attacks on the capital were particularly intense Tuesday and Wednesday, many others also had sought refuge in the fortified structure.

The survivors were taken to the nearby Yarmuk Hospital, and only two of them appeared conscious. All

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Jordan condemns 'brutal, barbaric crime'

By Nermeen Murad
Jordan Times Staff Reporter

AMMAN — Jordan on Wednesday described as brutal and barbaric the attack on a civilian shelter in Baghdad which killed over 500 people.

"Jordan received with horror and anger the news of this brutal massacre of old men and women and children who were hiding in the shelter to protect themselves from the daily round-the-clock bombardment since Jan. 17," said an official spokesman quoted by the Jordan News Agency, Petra.

"The Jordanian government denounced this barbaric act, and views it as a deviation from any military action," the spokesman said. "Jordan appeals to all Arab

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King calls on U.N. to order ceasefire, send mission to Iraq

AMMAN (J.T.) — His Majesty King Hussein has expressed sadness, outrage and shock over Wednesday's allied air attack which killed over 500 people at a civilian bomb shelter in Baghdad and urged the U.N. Security Council president to call for an immediate ceasefire in the Gulf war and send a fact-finding mission to Iraq.

The King, in a message sent to the council president, said: "I am moved by a deep sense of sadness, outrage and shock, emotions that are shared by hundreds of millions of people throughout the Muslim World, and indeed by all those who still retain belief that the sanctity of human life is worth respecting, to write to you on this ominous day on which another flagrant and callous violation of humanitarian law was committed against the civilian population of Iraq."

"The bombardment of a civilian shelter in Baghdad, resulting in the death of so many innocents is a tragic reminder that Security Council Resolution 678, interpreted by some as 'carte blanche' to wage a war of systematic destruction against Iraq, is a case of authority without accountability. May I suggest to Your Excellency that the council cannot abdicate legal and moral responsibility in the face of this complete disregard of the rules of proportionality not in the face of this callous disregard for human life."

"It was in the faint hope that sanity may make a stand and humanity may yet prevail that I warned in my speech on the 6th of February against the potential destructiveness unleashed against the people of Iraq. I advocated peace and dialogue as alternatives to war and destruction. Further-

more, I fear that inaction by the Security Council would be ominously reminiscent of the failure by the council of the League of Nations to restrain Italy in its attempts to subdue Abyssinia.

"It would be doubly tragic if, in what is supposedly a collective security action authorized by the Charter of the United Nations against Iraq, a founding member of the United Nations, all the rules relating to the protection of civilians in armed conflict which are applicable in international fighting were to be abandoned."

"It is with these considerations in mind that I implore upon Your Excellency the need to ensure that the present military action is not in violation of humanitarian law and to that end, call for an immediate cessation of hostilities and for a fact-finding mission to proceed to Baghdad."

Kuwait's no-compromise stand led to invasion, document indicates

By Abdullah Hasanat
Jordan Times Staff Reporter

AMMAN — Explicit, written instructions by the Emir of Kuwait, Sheikh Jaber Al Ahmad Al Sabah, not to make concession to Iraq over their border and economic disputes were apparently behind the failure of last-minute talks between Iraqi Vice-President Izzat Ibrahim and Kuwaiti Crown Prince Saad Al Abdullah Al Sabah in Jeddah on July 31, which subsequently led to the Iraqi invasion of Kuwait on Aug. 2.

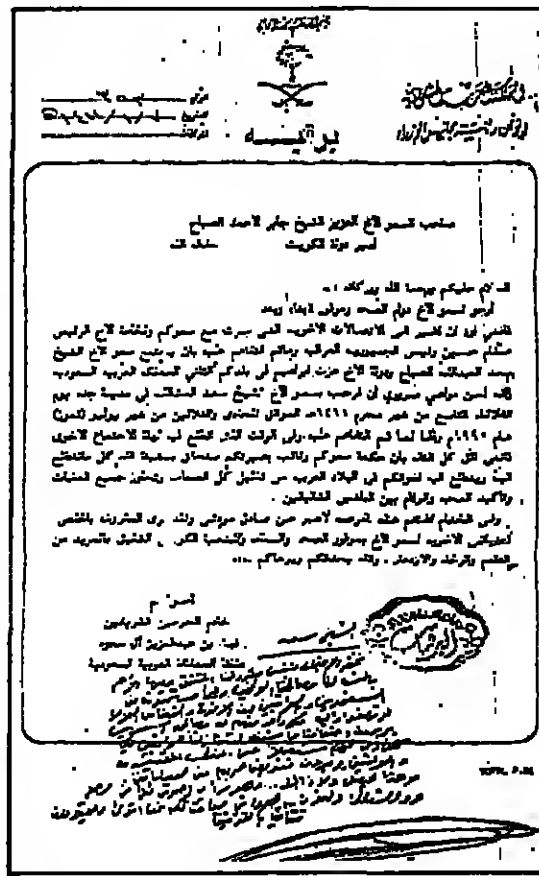
Not enough light has so far been shed on the Jeddah meeting, which was supposed to be a last-ditch effort to work out a solution for the problems between Iraq and Kuwait that ultimately led to the eruption of the Gulf war on Jan. 17.

In a hand-written document, a copy of which has been obtained by the Jordan Times, Sheikh Jaber instructed Crown Prince and Prime Minister Sheikh Saad not to give in to any Iraqi claims. "We are stronger than they think," the Emir wrote to his crown prince and prime minister on July 31.

The talks between the Iraqis and Kuwaitis started on July 31 but collapsed in only 24 hours, on Aug. 1 with Iraq saying Kuwait was unwilling to meet its demands of borders re-delineation, compensation for Iraqi oil pumped by the Kuwaitis from the Rumaila oilfield in southern Iraq.

In the memorandum, written on the margin of a cable from King Fahd of Saudi Arabia, the Emir tells Sheikh Saad not to listen to Iraqi or Saudi talk of Arab brotherhood and Arab solidarity.

He said each (Iraq and Saudi Arabia) had its interests. "The Saudis want to weaken us so that they can exploit our concessions to the Iraqis so that they can force us to make similar concessions in the future over the neutral zone, and the Iraqis want us to compensate them for their war (with Iran)," the Emir wrote.



Emir wrote.

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Iraq says allied plane shot down

NICOSIA (R) — Iraq said Wednesday it shot down one allied plane during 178 air raids but made no mention of an attack on a Baghdad shelter packed with civilians. Baghdad radio said U.S.-led allied planes carried out 86 air raids against civilian targets on Tuesday night and Wednesday. It said 92 raids were made on military installations in southern Iraq. Bridges, shops, factories and technical installations were listed among civilian targets. "The allied forces are continuing their raids on civilian and residential areas... killing innocent women and children. They are giving the world public opinion an irrefutable evidence of their barbarism," the radio said. Its report that a plane had been shot down brought to 309 the number of allied aircraft or missiles Iraq said it has knocked out since the Gulf war began Jan. 17. The U.S.-led coalition said a Saudi F-5 was missing in action, bringing the number of allied planes reported lost to 33.

30 Jordanians killed in allied air attack on bus in Kuwait

by Nermeen Murad
Jordan Times Staff Reporter

AMMAN — Thirty Jordanian civilians were reported killed and 28 injured in a direct allied air attack on a Jordanian bus which was evacuating 54 Jordanians out of battle-torn Kuwait Saturday. The Jordanian government has contacted its embassy in Baghdad to try and verify the reports and gather more information on the incident.

"We cannot confirm unless we receive an official response. We are dealing with human beings and families, we have to be sure," Information Minister Ibrahim Izzidine told the Jordan Times.

He added that the Foreign Ministry was contacting all possible channels to "be able to determine the extent of the incident." The embassy in Baghdad, he said, "will try to check with hospitals to see if there are any wounded Jordanians."

extent of the incident, we don't have names, so we will have to receive official verification," the minister said.

Agencies quoted a "survivor" of the bus attack as saying that 54 people who had banded together to flee the war in Kuwait were aboard the bus when the planes attacked it Saturday.

"We heard the planes come and they dropped bombs. One fell in front, one hit the bus and one fell behind," the survivor said. "We started running out and then another missile struck the middle of the bus and 30 people, including four children, were burned to death."

A senior Jordanian official, who preferred anonymity, told the Jordan Times that until Wednesday noon, the government had only received a single

"So far we do not know the

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Aziz to visit Moscow

Combined agency dispatches

IRAQI FOREIGN Minister Tariq Aziz was due in the Soviet capital Sunday to meet President Mikhail Gorbachev in the first visit by a high-ranking Iraqi official to a foreign country since the Gulf war began, a Kremlin spokesman said.

The trip follows a Soviet envoy's meeting Tuesday with Iraqi President Saddam Hussein.

"The discussions in Baghdad gave cause for hope," Gorbachev spokesman Vitaly Ignatenko said. He said his assessment was based on a telegram Kremlin envoy Yevgeny Primakov sent to Moscow about his talks with President Saddam.

Another Kremlin spokesman, Sergei Grigoriev, said the Moscow visit of Aziz is a follow-up to

Mr. Primakov's mission.

Little is known about what the Soviets have been discussing with the Iraqis or diplomats from other countries.

"I guess we should read into this fact that we are trying to continue some kind of dialogue with the Iraqis. We have tried to do it all along, and hopefully something will come out of it," Soviet Foreign Ministry spokesman Vitaly Churkin said.

Officials declined to otherwise elaborate on the Kremlin's diplomatic initiative.

"The essence of the Soviet plan will never go beyond the limits of the U.N. Security Council resolutions obliging Iraq to withdraw from Kuwait and restore the independence of Kuwait," Mr. Grigoriev said.

Mr. Churkin, speaking at a

regular news briefing, said the Soviet Union was not trying to serve as a mediator but "is trying to do everything possible to try to cease bloodshed as soon as possible and to achieve the full implementation of the Security Council resolutions."

Mr. Ignatenko told reporters Mr. Aziz would meet Mr. Gorbachev Monday "to continue the Soviet-Iraq contact."

Mr. Primakov was scheduled to return to Moscow Wednesday night.

President Saddam told Primakov that Iraq is prepared to cooperate with the Soviet Union and other nations to end the war, Baghdad Radio reported.

The White House reacted

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Sharon suggests Israel should strike at Iraq

Combined agency dispatches

ISRAEL'S HAWKISH housing minister, Ariel Sharon, Wednesday suggested that Israel should strike at Iraqi missile launchers even if it undermined the U.S.-led Gulf coalition, state-run Israel Television reported.

"Israel should act against missile launchers in western Iraq even if the coalition would lose its Arab members," the television quoted Mr. Sharon as saying.

"This very coalition will demand concessions from Israel after the end of the war," Mr. Sharon reportedly told the cabinet's defence committee.

Iraq has fired 33 Scud missiles at Israel since the Gulf war began Jan. 17. Under pressure from the United States, Israel has not retaliated for fear it could alienate Arab members of the anti-Iraqi coalition. Some of the Arab have threatened to withdraw their support if Israel enters the war.

A top aide to Mr. Shamir renewed Israel's warning to strike militarily if Iraqi troops penetrate Jordan or use chemical weapons against Israel.

"If Iraq enters Jordan, Israel will intervene," the aide, Avi Pazer, told the Spanish private radio network SER, renewing past warnings.

"If Iraq uses chemical

weapons, there will be a response on our part," Mr. Pazer also said.

He did not elaborate on how or when Israel might respond were Iraq to take such actions.

"We understand the American concern about a possible Israeli retaliation," he said.

"But in any response on our part, we would have to pass across Jordan and that could provoke changes in the position of the Arab countries," now allied with the U.S.-led multinational forces, Mr. Pazer said.

The United States has not agreed to turn over to Israel electronic codes needed to launch attacks against Iraq, a high-ranking Defence Department official indicated on Tuesday.

Asked if a CBS television report on the agreement was true, the Pentagon official shook his head negatively.

"We have not given Israel the IFF codes," the official told Reuters.

"This is not the case," said the official, who spoke on condition he would not be named.

Israel has been seeking access to the so-called "friend or foe" electronic recognition codes to enable it to retaliate against Iraq for Scud missile attacks.

Without the codes, allied warplanes over Iraq would be likely

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Non-aligned envoys to visit Iraq and U.S.

BELGRADE (Agencies) The Non-Aligned Movement (NAM) has said it will send missions to Iraq and the United States to explore ways of ending the Gulf war.

The foreign ministers of 15 non-aligned countries agreed to undertake the peace initiative at talks in Belgrade Tuesday.

The countries represented included Yugoslavia, the current chairman of the 102-member NAM, Iran, Algeria and Egypt, which are key players in the Middle East, and India, an influential senior member of the movement.

Delegates of the Palestine Liberation Organisation (PLO), which is widely seen as close to Iraq, also attended the meeting.

The foreign ministers said a three or four-member peace team would leave for Baghdad within days and envoys would be dispatched to Washington afterwards. But they did not come up with a formal peace plan to put forward.

"It is possible that through dialogue in Baghdad... a solution will be found," Yugoslav Foreign Minister Budimir Loncar told a news conference.

Conservative Soviet generals denounce allied attacks on Iraq

MOSCOW (R) — The Communist Party leadership of the Soviet Armed Forces Wednesday bitterly denounced the U.S.-led campaign against Iraq, and said the real goal was the extermination of civilians and the destruction of Moscow's former ally.

Senior officials in the armed forces' military-political administration, among the most hardline elements in Soviet society, compared allied attacks on Iraq with what they called persecution of Soviet soldiers in the rebel Baltic republics.

And they warned that only continued communist control of the military could guarantee the defence of the Soviet Union and preserve its vital interests.

Their comments, presented at a news conference, gave some insight into the conservative pressures now facing President Mikhail Gorbachev on domestic and foreign policy, particularly support for the U.S.-led campaign against Iraq.

"War is a serious matter, especially when we see the annihilation of people, the destruction of civilian targets. Many questions arise," said General Boris Golitshev, of the political department of the KGB (security police) troops.

"Is this really a war to protect the sovereignty of Kuwait? And was it worth exterminating so many people to safeguard this citizenship as is as, as unnatural as the Lithuanian government... leaving our servicemen without homes, without food, without kindergartens and schools."

The generals also stressed the vital role of the Communist Party in the armed forces, and suggested that the civilian authorities tampered with that relationship at their peril.

"The communists in the armed forces carry out state policy," said the KGB's Golitshev. "And a state will never reject an institution that projects its interests and protects the people."

between the Soviet and Iraqi military are strong.

Gen. Ovchinnikov compared the suffering of Iraqi civilians with that of Soviet servicemen in Lithuania, Latvia and Estonia, where pro-independence governments shun the troops as an occupying force.

"I think the fact that the Americans bomb and leave homeless and without food peaceful citizens is as bad, as unnatural as the Lithuanian government... leaving our servicemen without homes, without food, without kindergartens and schools."

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Syria ready to recognise Israel, Genscher reports

DAMASCUS (AP) — German Foreign Minister Hans-Dietrich Genscher said Wednesday that Syria is ready to recognise Israel's right to exist as part of a comprehensive Middle East peace order that would follow the Gulf war.

The Syrian side is aware that the right of self-determination for the Palestinians would mean that "Israel's right to exist is recognised and secured," Mr. Genscher told reporters at a briefing after more than two hours of talks with Syrian Foreign Minister Farouq Al Sharaf.

The Syrians said the territorial integrity of Iraq had to be a firm part of the post-war order in the area, Mr. Genscher said.

Mr. Genscher said the Syrians held a "constructive view" on the future Middle East peace order. He said the Syrians wanted to play a major role in the process, and also expected Germany to

make its own contribution.

It could not immediately be determined if the recognition signalled part of a deal involving Syria's participation in the anti-Iraq Gulf alliance.

There has been widespread speculation that Syria would extract some sort of guarantees resulting from its pact with the West. Damascus also certainly would insist on a return of the Golan Heights, taken by Israel in 1967 in one of four wars between the two countries since the end of World War II.

The 1,176 square kilometre plateau was "annexed" by Israel in 1981.

Mr. Genscher and Chinese Deputy Foreign Minister Yang Fuchang arrived in Damascus Wednesday for Gulf talks with Syrian officials.

Mr. Yang also has to meet with Mr. Sharaf.

Libya and Turkey discuss Gulf security with Egypt

CAIRO (R) — Libyan leader Muammar Qadhafi and Turkish Foreign Minister Ahmet Kurtcebe Alptemucin discussed Gulf security arrangements with Egyptian leaders Wednesday ahead of a key Arab meeting to lay foundations of the post-Gulf war era.

Colonel Qadhafi, who condemned the Iraqi invasion of Kuwait but also opposes the presence of U.S. and allied troops fighting to drive Baghdad out, met President Hosni Mubarak for the first time since the war began on Jan. 17.

Libya does not have troops in the Gulf force and has not been invited to attend Friday's session of foreign ministers of six Gulf Arab states, and Egypt and Syria to discuss proposals for a permanent Arab Gulf security force.

Turkey, a non-Arab neighbour of Iraq, has also not been invited. But Mr. Alptemucin said Ankara and Cairo shared the same understanding of the Gulf crisis and of post-war security.

"Whenever Turkey will be needed, Turkey will be ready to be with the neighbouring countries and Turkey will join any organisation to establish peace and stability in the region," he said after giving Mr. Mubarak a message from President Turgut Ozal.

Morocco, which has 1,300 troops in the Gulf force, has turned down an invitation to attend the two-day Cairo conference, a senior Western diplomat

said.

Egyptian officials declined to say if Rabat had officially refused, but one said: "I doubt they will attend."

King Hassan has faced massive public opposition to the war as support for Iraqi President Saddam Hussein has swept former French colonies across North Africa.

"The Moroccans are paying lip service to both sides, to their Maghreb union and to Saudi Arabia," the Egyptian official said.

Arab officials said the Cairo conference would also discuss a Gulf fund to ensure a more equitable sharing of Arab oil wealth among allied Arab states and ways to advance the Palestinian cause in peace talks with Israel immediately after the war.

A senior Western diplomat said the meeting would take "the first formal, institutionalised step towards post-war security."

Officials said Col. Qadhafi would stay in Cairo for one or two nights.

The Libyan leader and several other Arab leaders have voiced concern at the destruction of Iraq's military and civilian infrastructure.

Asked whether allied bombing exceeded a U.N. Security Council mandate to force Iraq out of Kuwait, Mr. Mubarak said: "How can I know if there are violations or not? Do you know the truth?"

Iraq war experience paying off

RIYADH (AP) — Iraqi forces in Kuwait still have serviceable military communications and supply links despite round-the-clock allied bombing, U.S. military officials said Wednesday.

In hundreds of missions, allied bombers have concentrated on severing supply lines — roads, bridges and rails — and disabling communication links between frontline units and the rear.

But the U.S. officials, speaking on condition of anonymity, said Iraq has managed to rig up makeshift systems to move supplies and communicate.

However, they mainly link Iraqi units deployed within Kuwait and lack central direction from Baghdad, the officials contended.

"They're managing to patch it all together, and they have lost major links, although some may be left," said one of the officials.

One official said some Iraqi commanders may be able to communicate with one another, but said coordinating a major attack would be "very difficult" for the Iraqis.

The main strategy of U.S. forces in the past 10 days has been to isolate the battlefield in Kuwait in preparation for an expected ground assault.

U.S. officials have said the flow of supplies from Iraq into the Kuwaiti theatre of operations — southern Iraq and Kuwait — has been cut by as much as 90 per cent.

However, the dug-in forces in the area are still able to move about half their supplies, the officials said.

They said the main Iraqi supply priority was ammunition. The estimated 300,000 Iraqi troops entrenched in the Kuwaiti desert are "probably in pretty good shape" for ammunition despite indications allied bombs have struck munitions or fuel storage dumps, one official said.

The officials said information gleaned from Iraqi prisoners indicates a "somewhat spotty" supply situation. The units deployed farthest south towards the Saudi border — considered the weaker troops — are suffering most from shortages of food and other items, they asserted.

The better troops in the rear, including the Republican Guards, appear to have more efficient supply systems that reflected better leadership and organisation, the officials said.

They said Iraq's experience during the 1980-88 Iran-Iraq war was paying off.

"They are still able to flow some (traffic) around the battlefield, and they are always trying to trick us," one official said. He cited the Iraqis' ability to move long-range Scud-type missiles into position for roughly coordinated firing on targets in Israel and Saudi Arabia.

The Iraqis, the official said, make extensive use of limited-range technology to piece together a communications network. But the communications are not secure.

"Every time he transmits, he's taking a risk," said one official. Other officials said allied monitors listen to virtually every message the Iraqis transmit.

'Ramadan no deadline'

Kuwait's ambassador to Germany said Wednesday there was no reason to halt Gulf war fighting when the Islamic fasting month of Ramadan starts in mid-March.

Khalid Al Babtain told a news conference the multinational forces did not face a religious deadline.

"Do not believe the allied forces could come under time pressure because of the Ramadan month or the pilgrimage season soon after for the simple reason that the fight can certainly be continued through Ramadan," he said.

"The month of Ramadan does not prohibit fighting during that month," Mr. Babtain said, speaking through an interpreter.

Li: Time not yet right for peaceful Gulf solution

BEIJING (Agencies) — China's Li Peng believes the time is not yet right for a peaceful solution to the Gulf war, but he welcomes the efforts towards peace now being made.

"Li said that because of the differing attitudes of countries involved in the war, the time is not right for acquiring a peaceful settlement to the Gulf crisis," the official New China News Agency reported late Tuesday.

"At a time when the war is on the verge of expansion and escalation, China welcomes the calls for peace and mediation which are being made by an increasing number of countries and international organisations," the agency quoted Li as telling Farouk Kaddoumi, head of the political department of the Palestine Liberation Organisation (PLO).

The agency said Mr. Li believed continuing effort "might create conditions resulting in a peaceful solution to the crisis."

China sent Monday a vice foreign minister as a special envoy to Syria, Turkey and Iran to try to find a peaceful solution to the Gulf conflict.

Although it is firmly opposed to Iraq's annexation of Kuwait, China has repeatedly expressed its concern about the war and its desire for restraint and a peaceful solution.

China was the only permanent member of the U.N. Security Council to abstain from the resolution authorising force to evict Iraq from Kuwait, but voted with the other four — the United States, Britain, France and the Soviet Union — in favour of earlier resolutions on the Gulf crisis.

China officials have not said if Vice-Foreign Minister Yang Fuchang is bringing a specific peace proposal with him.

The Foreign Ministry also said Mr. Yang would travel to Yugoslavia, but did not say if the trip was in connection with a meeting Tuesday in Belgrade by co-aligned countries discussing the Gulf crisis.

After war broke out, China distanced itself from the alliance members and has urged an end to the fighting.

Western diplomats say China does not want to risk damaging its friendly ties with Arab and Muslim nations over a dispute where it has no vital interest at stake.

The New China News Agency said Li reiterated China's support for the PLO.

"The Palestine issue represents the core of the Middle East issue and China will, as always, stand for a fair and reasonable settlement of the Palestinian issue through negotiation," it quoted Mr. Li as saying.

Sheikh Saad calls for end to bickering

BAHRAIN (Agencies) — Kuwait's crown prince and prime minister issued a plea for unity Tuesday, calling on the faction-ridden exile community to stop squabbling, band together and liberate Kuwait.

"Today is the day of struggle," Sheikh Saad Abdullah Al Sabah said. "No voice is louder than the voice of battle; no call should be there but the call for the liberation of Kuwait."

The crown prince appeared to chide both conservative and pro-democracy factions of the exiled community, recently wracked by differences over the future of the oil-rich country.

While he scolded activists for planning a meeting to discuss ways to challenge the ruling family, Sheikh Saad also promised "to adhere to the 1962 constitution," a key opposition demand.

"Let all know that the liberation of Kuwait will be achieved by national unity," Sheikh Saad said, "with fighting and not words, with arms and not microphones, with battles and not symposiums."

He also appeared to take aim at conservative members of the toppled government who have lobbied against reforming the ruling family, which has led Kuwait since 1759.

"Our commitment to popular participation is a firm pledge on which there is no return," he said in a statement carried by KUNA, the news agency of the ousted government.

The prime minister's statement followed the announcement Monday that the ruling family had dismissed an opposition demand for the immediate return of the parliament it dissolved in 1986 if, and when, Iraq is driven from Kuwait.

The toppled government also denied activists' requests for speedy elections.

Sheikh Saad's statement made no mention of the national assembly or elections.

A Western diplomat who follows relations between the toppled regime and the opposition described Sheikh Saad's statement as "peace pipe to the opposition."

Previous statements on the squabbles have been made by Minister of Information Bader Al Yacoub, a relatively low-ranking figure. The fact that Sheikh Saad, next in line for the throne, weighed in was a sign that the

ruling family is taking the problem seriously, the diplomat said. Disintegration of the coalition could threaten Kuwait's reconstruction and the country could again face political turmoil, a prospect with implications for the whole region.

At a conference in Jeddah, Saudi Arabia in October, opposition figures and the ruling family shelved their long-term disagreements and agreed to work for the liberation of Kuwait under the leadership of the emir, Sheikh Jaber Al Ahmad Al Sabah.

Now opposition figures say they feel used by the ruling family in its attempts to gain legitimacy in the eyes of Kuwaitis abroad and those who remain inside.

The main disagreement between the two parties concerns Kuwait's 1962 constitution.

Opposition leaders say the toppled regime had formed a special "security committee" that will set up a martial law government to preside over Kuwait's reconstruction.

That, they say, violates Article 181 of the constitution which mandates that parliament continues during martial law.

Opposition leaders say they fear the ruling family will use martial law to cement its control of the state.

The ruling family denies it has plans to monopolise state power, a platform reflected in Sheikh Saad's statement Tuesday.

The ruling family dissolved the national assembly and slapped restrictions on Kuwait's press in 1986 after a state of pro-Iranian bombings and an aborted attempt on the emir's life.

The national assembly had been the only freely elected body in the Gulf region.

Obviously most Kuwaitis appear to take it for granted that they would go back to "liberated" Kuwait.

Mr. Yacoub in an interview with Reuters this week ruled out plans to recall the dissolved parliament and said early elections would be impossible in "liberated" Kuwait.

The diplomats said this was understandable in view of the massive security problems and issues which must be tackled by post-occupation authorities.

They said martial law, which Mr. Yacoub said might be imposed for a period, could save Kuwait from possible lawlessness.



DEMOLISHED: A house wrecked by allied air bombing in Iraq

Gunmen rob ship in Gulf

DUBAI (R) — Two masked gunmen boarded a Danish freighter which had previously unloaded military cargo in Saudi Arabia and stole cash and papers, the captain said Wednesday.

"I'm a bit shaky but otherwise I'm okay. Suddenly I was looking into the barrel of a machinegun," said Captain Henri Staerke Hansen, master of the 1,557-tonne Arkis Sun, who was handcuffed to the wheel by the black-clad, red-masked men.

The Danish master told Reuters from Dubai port that one of the men spoke and used accented English. His skin was dark, but he could not be sure of their original language.

He said he had no idea how the gunmen had boarded his ship.

"In the middle of hundreds of warships and helicopters and all that. Goddam, everyone told me it was safe," said Captain Hansen, commenting on the huge U.S.-led military presence in the Gulf.

The gunmen surprised the captain in his stateroom on the bridge, took a sealed letter from his government to open in event of war, all cargo papers, and some NATO documents giving war instructions, which many ships carry.

"You don't need to attack a ship to get hold of these NATO papers. They are unclassified," said a Gulf shipping manager.

Capt. Hansen said his ship had unloaded an unspecified military cargo for the British ministry of defence at the Saudi port of Jubail. "Nasty stuff. I was glad to get it off," he said.

The captain said he radioed for help as soon as he got free and was answered by an American tanker, Rover, and a warship, one of dozens in the strategic waterway taking part in allied operations.

He said the men had boarded, apparently undetected by the eight-strong crew, while the small ship was stopped on Tuesday evening due to engine trouble about 80 kilometres northwest of Abu Dhabi, in the UAE said he did not see them board, or disembark.

"They looked very professional. I think they knew exactly what they wanted," he said.

A U.S. military spokesman at the joint military command in Saudi Arabia said Wednesday the ship was unaware of the incident.

Capt. Hansen said he had not yet been approached by any authorities to investigate the attack, but the unidentified warship which replied to his distress signal said it would pass the information on.

There have been no attacks on ships in the central Gulf since the August, 1988, ceasefire in the Gulf war between Iraq and Iran when Iranian gunboats, crewed by Revolutionary Guards, staged lightning raids against merchant vessels.

U.S. conservatives want CNN out of Baghdad

WASHINGTON (R) — A coalition of conservative U.S. groups said Tuesday they were working to get Cable News Network (CNN) and its correspondent, Peter Arnett, removed from Iraq, saying the network was a propagandist for Baghdad.

At a news conference, representatives of the groups led by media critic Reed Irvine said they had written President George Bush asking him to cancel a government exemption that helped CNN get round U.N. sanctions and operate in Iraq.

A spokeswoman for CNN said the network would have no direct comment on the group's criticism.

But the network released a statement from CNN Executive Vice-President Ed Turner that said "at no time has the network misrepresented" the fact that CNN broadcasts from Baghdad are subject to Iraqi censorship.

"Arnett and CNN are there so all over viewers can be there, as imperfect, restricted and dangerous as the conditions are," Mr. Turner said.

Mr. Irvine, head of the conservative group Accuracy in Media, and the other groups charged Iraq had "succeeded in manipulating Peter Arnett and his crew" to aid its cause in the Gulf war.

Mr. Arnett has been operating in Baghdad under strict Iraqi censorship and travel restrictions. A New Zealander, Mr. Arnett is an experienced correspondent who won the Pulitzer prize while

reporting for the Associated Press during the Vietnam war.

Mr. Irvine called him "an unpaid propagandist" and compared him to William Joyce, a British citizen known as "Lord Haw Haw" who was a paid broadcaster for Hitler, and Iva Toguri, an American who broadcast for the Japanese under the name "Tokyo Rose" during World War II.

After the war, Mr. Joyce was found guilty of treason and hanged by the British and Mr. Toguri was sentenced to prison by the Americans, but Mr. Irvine said he was not suggesting that Mr. Arnett suffer similar fates.

Although Mr. Arnett is not the only correspondent in Baghdad and CNN is not the only news operation there, the group said their focus was on CNN and Mr. Arnett, whom they also criticised for his reporting during the Vietnam war.

"We're still investigating Peter Arnett's record in Vietnam," said Mr. Irvine.

Mr. Irvine said he believed that no one should be reporting from Baghdad for an American organisation.

"If they were not helping the enemy, the enemy would not permit them to be there," Irvine said.

Mr. Arnett and CNN have been under attack from several quarters, including from Republican Senator Alan Simpson of Wyoming who accused Mr. Arnett of being an Iraqi "sympathiser."

American churches support conscientious war objectors

By Michael Perry
Reuters

CANBERRA — American religious leaders called Wednesday for churches across the United States to give sanctuary to members of the armed forces who wished to become conscientious objectors to the Gulf war.

"Let our churches offer support and assistance to conscientious objectors who are refusing military service for reasons of faith and conscience," the National Council of Churches of the United States said in a statement issued here at the World Council of Churches seventh assembly and in New York.

Bishop Melvin Talbot of the United Methodist Church told a news conference a number of churches were considering giving sanctuary to conscientious objectors.

"We have people who are not conscientious objectors in the strict sense of the word, but they object to this war. They do not believe it is a just war and they have decided not to go to war," Bishop Talbot said.

"We encourage people that if that is where they are, then they should be committed and the church should give them sup-

port."

Bishop Talbot said the number of Americans refusing to go to war would rise once a ground offensive started and casualties rose. He said he did not know whether the U.S. government would honour the sanctuary of churches protecting objectors.

"During the fighting in El Salvador churches gave sanctuary to people in the country and the government did not invade those churches, but I don't know what will happen this time."

The National Council also called for an anti-war movement similar to that which existed during the Vietnam war to put pressure on politicians to end the Gulf conflict.

"The Vietnam war period, the civil rights period led by Martin Luther King, are pieces of our history and show that the church can speak words that are picked up by many people and become a strong political movement," the Reverend Joan Campbell, general secretary of the National Council, told the conference.

"I am a mother of a politician and I am aware that politicians pay attention to what the public say. We have to build a grassroots movement which will eventually turn policy around."

MIDDLE EAST NEWS IN BRIEF

Protest in Bandung against Saudi, U.S.

JAKARTA (R) — More than 100 people demonstrated in the West Java city of Bandung Wednesday in protest against the role of Saudi Arabia and the United States in the Gulf war, a witness said. The evening paper Suara Pembinaan put the total number at 300, mostly students, in the peaceful march which called for an end to the fighting. It was the first protest in predominantly Muslim Indonesia directly against Saudi Arabia since the war broke out four weeks ago. The witness said some of the protesters were chanting in Arabic and carrying signs saying "Saudi Arabia is a Jewish agent" and "Saudi Arabia — stooge of the U.S. and Israel." Others demanded the closure of the U.S. and Saudi embassies in Jakarta and a withdrawal of troops from Saudi Arabia. The government, concerned by possible outbreaks of violence, has repeatedly urged Indonesians to keep calm over the war.

U.S. to airlift German missiles

BONN (R) — The United States will airlift German air defence missiles to Turkey in the next few days after Moscow stopped a Soviet plane carrying the shipment, the U.S. embassy said Wednesday. "Despite heavy utilisation of its Galaxy air force transport aircraft, the American government will provide this help as an act of solidarity with its German friends and allies," it said. Germany agreed earlier this month to send Roland and Hawk air defence missiles and 600 airmen to protect two air bases in NATO-member Turkey from possible Iraqi attack. Shipment was delayed because Bonn did not have a large enough plane. The government chartered a Soviet Antonov-124 cargo plane but its crew refused last Friday to fly to Turkey. Bonn blamed the decision on political intervention by Moscow. Germany, barred by its constitution from sending forces outside the NATO area, already has 18 Alpha jets and 200 airmen at Turkey's Erincan base.

Britain seeks Iranian help over hostages

LONDON (R) — Britain has urged Iran to step up its efforts to free British hostages in Lebanon and to review the case of British businessman Roger Cooper, jailed by Tehran on espionage charges. The request was made during a meeting between Foreign Office Minister Douglas Hogg and Iranian Charge d'Affaires Shamseddin Kharegani in London Tuesday. The Foreign Office described the talks as "useful," and said Mr. Kharegani had promised that Iran would continue its efforts to trace hostages in Lebanon, including the three missing Britons — journalist John McCarthy, Church of England envoy Terry Waite, and former fighter pilot Jackie Mann. Mr. Kharegani also raised the subject of Iranians held in Lebanon. Britain and Iran restored diplomatic relations last year after a break of 18 months over the publication of the novel "The Satanic Verses" by British writer Salman Rushdie. Tehran regards the book as blasphemous to Islam and has urged Muslims to kill Mr. Rushdie for writing it.

Berlin may deport Arabs

BERLIN (R) — Berlin authorities want to deport some Arab residents and have curbed the movements of others, in response to Iraqi calls for violence against Gulf alliance nations, a senior city official said Tuesday. Dieter Heckelmann, interior senator (minister) in Germany's largest city, told a news conference that some Arab residents had been banned from political activity and told to report regularly to police. He gave no details of deportation procedures. A student council spokesman at Berlin's technical university said he knew of five Arab students who were affected. "It is feared, or cannot be ruled out," Mr. Heckelmann said.

U.S. sets guidelines for Iraqi property

WASHINGTON (AP) — The treasury department said Tuesday that people holding blocked Iraqi property or wishing to assert claims against the Baghdad government must file reports with the U.S. treasury by next month. The department's office of foreign assets control said the information is needed to monitor compliance with the freeze that President George Bush imposed on all Iraqi property and assets in the United States immediately after the Aug. 2 invasion of Kuwait. The reports on claims against the Iraqi government must be submitted by March 1, although these reports will not constitute the formal filing of a claim for compensation.

Israel protests over Japanese cut

TOKYO (R) — Japan rejected suggestions by Israel Wednesday that it had singled out the Jewish state for a two-week cut in mail and banking services after the start of the Gulf war. Postal services were cut to Israel and eight other countries in the Middle East from Jan. 17 because civilian air flights to them were suspended, a Foreign Ministry official said. As a result, banks could not send letters of credit or other business documents. It took until Feb. 1 for Japan's Ministry of Posts and Telecommunications to arrange a regular alternative route, using Japanese carriers to European cities, from where mail was transferred to the Israeli airline El Al, the official said. A spokesman at the Israeli embassy said Israel's business community had been enraged by the refusal of Japanese banks to issue letters of credit after the war started.

Office of Afghan relief group attacked

PESHAWAR (AP) — A hand grenade was tossed into the walled compound of a British-run Afghan relief organisation, causing minor damage but no injuries, officials said Wednesday. The attack took place late Tuesday after the office of Afghan Aid U.K. had closed, officials said. No one claimed responsibility for the attack, but police said the incident may be linked to the Gulf war. Afghan Aid U.K. is one of more than 150 relief organisations headquartered in Peshawar to help the 3.8 million Afghan refugees who fled neighbouring Afghanistan after the 1979 Soviet invasion.

Kuwaiti team meets with Castro in Havana

MEXICO CITY (AP) — A Kuwaiti delegation met with President Fidel Castro Tuesday and also visited Interim Foreign Minister Alcides Hidalgo in Havana, the Cuban news agency Prensa Latina reported. The agency said Kuwaiti Minister of Higher Education Ali Abdullah Al Shammari delivered a message to Mr. Castro from Sheikh Jaber Al Ahmad Al Sabah, the emir of Kuwait, but did not divulge its contents.

JORDAN TIMES DAILY GUIDE AND CALENDAR

PRAYER TIMES

06:58 Fajr
06:16 (Sunrise) Dhuhr
11:59 Dhuhr
14:56 'Asr
17:04 Maghreb
18:42 Isha

CHURCHES

St. Mary of Nazareth Church Swedish Tel. 810740
Assembly of God Church, Tel. 652785
St. Joseph Church Tel. 624590
Church of the Assumption Tel. 637440
De la Salle Church Tel. 661757
Teremants Church Tel. 622365
Church of the Assumption Tel. 623541
Anglican Church Tel. 625383, Tel. 626543
Armenian Catholic Church Tel.

713331
Armenian Orthodox Church Tel. 713331
St. Ephraim Church Tel. 713751
Armenian International Church Tel. 827961, 685326
Evangelical Lutheran Church Tel. 811293
The Church of Jesus Christ of Latter-Day Saints Tel. 815817 and 659232

WEATHER

Bulletin supplied by the Department of Meteorology.

It will be partly cloudy and there will be a rise in temperatures.

	Min./Max. temp.
Amman	4 / 15
Amman	12 / 25
Deserts	3 / 16
Jordan Valley	9 / 22

Yesterday's high temperature: Amman 14, Amman 26. Humidity readings: Amman 46 per cent, Amman 15 per cent.

USEFUL TELEPHONE NUMBERS

AMMAN:
Dr. Ahmad Nasser 639934
Dr. Bahjat Bader 849362
Dr. Walid Damani 794800
Dr. Mohammed Abu Madi 792344
Fire station 661912
Ferdows pharmacy 778336
Al Ansum pharmacy 637055
Nasrallah pharmacy 626672

Al Salem pharmacy 636730
Yacoub pharmacy 644945
Shmouk pharmacy 637660

REMO:
Dr. Kamel Al Najjar (—)
Al Shams' pharmacy (273625)

ZARQA:
Dr. Youssef Awad (—)
Khalil pharmacy 985417

EMERGENCIES

Food Control Centre 637111
Civil Defence Department 661111
Civil Defence Immediate 630541
Rescue 630541
Civil Defence Emergency 199

Rescue Police 192, 621111, 637777
Fire Brigade 891228
Blood Bank 778221
Highway Police 843402
Traffic Police 896390
Public Security Department 630321
Hotel Complaints 658900
Price Complaints 661176
Water and Sewerage 661176

Complaints 897467
Amman Municipality 787111
Telephone Information 121
Overseas Calls 010230
Central Amman Telephone 642362
Ropas 623101
Abdell Telephone Repairs 661101
Jordan Television 773111

Radio Jordan 774111
Water Authority 681009
Jordan Electricity Authority 815615
Electric Power 674125
Company 636381
RU Flight Information 06-53200
Queen Alia Int. Airport 06-53200

HOSPITALS

AMMAN:
Hamza Medical Centre 813813/32
Khaldun Maternity, J. Amn 644261/6
Abdell Maternity, J. Amn 624412
Jabal Amman Maternity 642362
Malha, J. Amman 636140
Palatine, Shmouk 664174
Shmouk Hospital 689131

University Hospital 845845
Al-Munther Hospital 6672719
The Islamic, Abdell 666127/37
Al-Ahli, Abdell 6661646
Italian, Al-Munther 777013
Al-Badr, J. Abdell 775111/26
Amn, Marha 891617/15
Queen Alia Hospital 6224050
Amn Hospital 674125

ZARQA:
Zarqa Govt. Hospital (09)863233
Zarqa National Hospital (09)991071
Ru Shmouk Hospital (09)98732

REMO:
Palatine Shmouk Hospital (02)278555
Greek Catholic Hospital (02)22275
Ru Al Nasser Hospital (02)247600
AQABA:
Palatine Hays Hospital (05)314111

MARKET PRICES

Upper/lower price in Sls per kg.
Apples 550 / 480

Bananas	300 / 450
Bananas (Malabar)	450 / 400
Bananas	550 / 450
Cabbages	80 / 40
Carrots	200 / 150
Cauliflower	300 / 250
Cauliflowers (large)	340 / 270
Cauliflowers (small)	260 / 220
Onions	300 / 150
Eggplants	200 / 130
Garlic	1600 / 1400
Lemons	180 / 140
Marrows (large)	160 / 100
Marrows (small)	340 / 270
Onions (dry)	270 / 240
Onions (green)	180 / 120
Okra	600 / 500
Oranges	300 / 200
Peppers (hot)	300 / 250
Peppers (sweet)	200 / 150
Potatoes	180 / 120
Raspberries	100 / 50
Sage</	

Speakers focus on Gulf war dangers of oil, gases to global environment

Symposium points to U.S. as world's top pollutant

AMMAN (J.T.) — The United States, which is leading the devastating war on Iraq at present, is the world number one industrial pollutant of the environment, estimated to be responsible for 80 per cent of the total danger resulting from dumping industrial waste, according to the chairman of the Jordanian Society for the Protection of the Environment from Pollution.

As well as the great danger America continues to cause to the world by dumping its waste in Latin America and African countries through bribery and intimidation, it is now involved in a war that does not only cause the death of thousands of people but is aggravating the deteriorating environmental situation by causing pollution to the world's water, soil and air, Ahmad Obeidat said at the opening of a symposium on the dangers of the Gulf war to the world's environment.

Should the Gulf war continue, Obeidat said, hundreds of thousands of people will lose their lives either directly from the war or through the polluted environment that is bound to affect the coming generations and their air, water and soil.

Furthermore, the war on the Arab and Islamic Nation is poisoning inter-human relations around the world and sowing seeds of hatred for the future with most detrimental consequences. Obeidat noted in his address to the symposium held at the Royal Cultural Centre in Amman.

The world's major powers ought to regard the world as a whole integrated body and deal with the natural resources as being of concern and benefit to the whole human family, and ought to reduce their military spending which tends to destroy man's natural resources, Obeidat said.

According to Obeidat, half a million scientists are now involved in research work designed to improve arms and mass destruction weapons on which billions of dollars are being spent, far more than sums allocated for improving the quality of human health, or increasing agricultural production, finding alternative sources of energy and dealing with pollution.

While nearly \$1,000 billion is spent annually on the military, the world — mostly the poor countries — continues to suffer from lack of clean potable water which, according to statistics, is responsible for 80 per cent of diseases, Obeidat noted.

Obeidat warned against the use of nuclear, bacteriological or chemical weapons in the Gulf war as such, he said, can be catastrophic to mankind at large.

Obeidat urged the major powers of the world to reconsider their policies and to stop the trend of transforming the East-West cold war into a devastating war for the Third World countries, and to stop the devastating war in the Gulf.

light, but would also cause permanent higher temperatures around the world for many years to come with detrimental consequences to plant, animal and human life alike, Toukan noted.

Since Kuwaiti oil contains 3.4 per cent sulphur and 0.14 per cent nitrogen, the burning of this oil would result in the fall of acid rain on the globe and a shortfall of oxygen and a rise in the level of carbon dioxide in the world's atmosphere, Toukan said.

Dr. Ali Abanda, director of the Department of Meteorology, outlined to the meeting the dangers that the Gulf war could cause to the general world climate. Abanda presented to the meeting a set of satellite photographs clearly displaying the adverse changes in the atmospheric layers since the start of the war last month and until today.

Another scientist, Abdul Hay Zalloum, expressed deep concern over the catastrophic consequences to the world economy in general after the potential reserves of oil had been lost. He said burning the oil in Kuwait could cause the depletion of oil not only in Kuwait but in other fields too and that the blaze in Kuwait may be almost impossible to put out. In his address, Zalloum outlined the other dangers posed to the water in the Gulf due to the oil slicks, specially to the desalination and power generation plants.

Iranian deputies express solidarity with Jordanians against Zionism, enemies of Islam

AMMAN (J.T.) — The first Iranian delegation to visit Jordan in 11 years arrived here Wednesday and announced Iran's solidarity with the Jordanian people in the face of the common enemies.

Islam is the basic and most important factor which links the Jordanian and the Iranian people and pits them in the same trench confronting the American-Zionist onslaught directed against Islam and the Muslim people, said Mohammad Salamati, head of the three man delegation during a meeting at parliament with the Upper House of Parliament Speaker Ahmad Al Lawzi and House members.

The imperialist and Zionist forces seek to impose their domination on the Muslim world and its natural resources through the present Gulf war and under the pretext of liberating Kuwait from Iraqi occupation, Salamati said.

Iran does not approve of Iraq's takeover of Kuwait, but this stand should not be exploited by our enemies as a pretext to ensure their hegemony on the area, Salamati added.



WELCOME: Upper House of Parliament Speaker Ahmad Al Lawzi and other House members (above) held talks with the Iranian delegation who also exchanged views with Abdul Latif Arabiyat, speaker of the Lower House of Parliament (below).

Iran hopes to fulfill its dreams by creating the so-called "greater Israel" through exploiting the various crises in the region and therefore, Muslim countries should remain vigilant and alert such plots, and should adopt a stand whereby they must consider any aggression on any Muslim country as one directed against all Islamic nations, Salamati noted.

Salamati expressed hope that the delegation's visit would open the way for further cooperation between Iran and Jordan in all fields.

Iran feels that it is its duty to support all Islamic nations as such it is rising above all previous wounds and is willing to extend assistance to all Muslim brothers, Salamati added.

For this reason, Iran does not tolerate to see the Iraqi people suffering in this crisis without extending a helping hand to its people and Iran can by no means allow the enemies of Islam to go on killing the Iraqi people and looting the Islamic World's wealth, said the Iranian emissary.

For his part, Lawzi said that the war which America is now waging against Iraq could well be directed in the future against other Arab and Islamic countries. "Confronting the aggression now being waged on Iraq is a duty for all Arabs and Muslims, because this aggression aims at consolidating Israel's hold on Arab territories in occupied Palestine," Lawzi said.

stand in confrontation with the Israeli enemy and expressed hope that all Islamic countries would join forces and help liberate Palestine from Israeli occupation.

Salamati and his delegation met earlier with the Lower House of Parliament Speaker Abdul Latif Arabiyat, who landed Iran's support for Iraq in the face of the American aggression.

Salamati delivered to Arabiyat a message from his Iranian counterpart, Mehdi Karubi, outlining Iran's five point peace for ending the Gulf war and handed an invitation to Arabiyat to visit Iran at the head of a parliamentary delegation.

The delegation said it would discuss the five point initiative which calls for the withdrawal of Iraqi forces from Kuwait and foreign forces from the Gulf.

Konubi's plan which also demands an end to Jewish emigration to Israel is not backed by the American government which is pursuing separate peace proposals.

Reuters news agency quoted Information Minister Ibrahim Izzeddin as saying that he believed Iran could play a very important role in resolving the Gulf crisis.

He told reporters at a daily briefing that Iran was in a unique position as a regional power bordering Iraq and taking an open handed position on the crisis.

The delegation which includes deputies Mohammad Karim Shahrzad and Qorbani Saleh-badi plans to leave Amman Thursday.

Sudanese medical team arrives, to head for Baghdad soonest

By Odeh Odeh
Special to the Jordan Times

AMMAN — A group of 13 doctors and male nurses from Sudan arrived here Wednesday as the first batch soon to head for Iraq to offer medical treatment to Iraqi injured in the bombing raids.

According to Dr. Hassan Khreis, chairman of Arab Health Committee set up by the Arab Doctors Union (ADU) recently, 1700 Sudanese doctors, specialists and nurses have offered to go to Iraq and carry out humanitarian missions in the hospitals there.

Khreis, who welcomed the Sudanese group at the airport, said that arrangements will be immediately made for the group members' departure for Baghdad.

He said that the Sudanese mission is a noble one and is of

paramount importance to the Iraqi people suffering from continued aggression by the allied forces.

One of the Sudanese doctors, Ali Al Tayyeb Al Amin, said that many of those offering to go to Iraq had volunteered to work in Lebanon during the 1982 Israeli invasion.

The Sudanese people wholeheartedly support the Iraqi people and can barely wait to offer help to those in need at this crucial time, said Al Amin.

Al Amin, who heads the Sudanese group, called on the Arab governments to back the Iraqi leadership in its endeavour to fight off the allied invasion because he noted Iraq is defending the whole Arab Nation.

"The Sudanese doctors and nurses offered assistance to Egypt and Syria during the 1973 Arab-Israeli war, and are ready to offer any assistance to other Arabs anywhere," Al Amin stated. He

said, "the fact that Sudanese doctors and nurses are now going to Iraq to offer assistance manifests Sudan's solidarity and support for the Iraqi people."

Khreis Tuesday welcomed a group of 32 Algerian male and female doctors and specialists who are also on their way to Iraq in accordance with a programme prepared by the Arab Health Committee. One of the Algerian doctors said that at least 500 Algerian specialists and general practitioners have registered to go to Iraq carrying medical aid.

According to Khreis, this is the second Algerian batch of doctors and nurses to be sent to Iraq, as the first batch left at the outbreak of the conflict. He said that several other medical teams from Algeria and Tunisia will be arriving here in the coming few days for similar missions.

All the missions are carrying medicines and medical equipment needed by the Iraqi people.

Food ship arrives at Aqaba after hectic journey

AMMAN (J.T.) — A cargo vessel with food supplies to Jordan that include 1,224 tonnes of dried milk has docked at Aqaba port following delays and harassment by the allied warships in the Red Sea, Radi Ibrahim, the Ministry of Supply secretary general announced.

He told the Jordan News Agency, Petra that the vessel, Cotanagha, carried to Aqaba 126 containers full of milk imported by the Ministry of Supply after a delay that lasted three weeks.

The warships stopped the vessel at Jeddah port for a week before allowing its captain to resume his voyage towards Aqaba, but the American and French navies intercepted the ship again at the Tiran Straits and refused to allow it to proceed to Aqaba, ordering its captain to head for the Egyptian port of Suez to discharge the contents of the containers for inspection, Ibrahim added.

But according to Ibrahim, the Egyptian authorities apologized, asserting that they have no facilities for such operation, which prompted the captain to head for Port of Sudan whose authorities refused to unload the containers for inspection because they were imported by Jordan.

Ibrahim said that the captain was then forced to head for Tiran Straits where his vessel was thoroughly inspected and searched by the American and French warships, a procedure followed by intensive contacts involving Jordanian officials who succeeded in the end to get clearance for the ship to head for Aqaba.

In addition to the milk, the vessel carried 80 containers of food supplies imported by the Jordanian private sector, Ibrahim noted.

Jordanian shipping agents earlier reported that despite the Gulf war, the allied naval forces were maintaining their strict embargo on goods bound for Jordan.

NATIONAL NEWS IN BRIEF

Prince Hassan visits army division

AMMAN (Petra) — His Royal Highness Crown Prince Hassan Wednesday visited the Third Armoured Division headquarters where he was received by its commander, its chief of staff and the commanders of its formations. After a briefing on the duties assigned to the division, Prince Hassan toured its various formations and met with officers and soldiers. The Crown Prince conveyed to them the greetings of His Majesty King Hussein and thanked them for their efforts and for their high morale.

Irbid mayor congratulates King

AMMAN (Petra) — His Majesty King Hussein Wednesday received a cable of congratulations from Irbid Mayor Abdul Razzaq Tubeishat on the occasion of Al Israa Wal Miraj anniversary. Mr. Tubeishat voiced support for His Majesty King Hussein's stands and for the Iraqi people and leadership in fighting "the groups of mercenaries who are stealing the wealth of the Arab Nation and destroying its eternal Islamic civilisation."

"We hope we will celebrate the anniversary next year when Jerusalem is liberated and the allied countries' armies are defeated," the cable concluded.

House hears government replies

AMMAN (J.T.) — The Lower House of Parliament Wednesday held a brief session during which its members heard replies by cabinet members to queries from several deputies concerning a host of issues. These included questions related to rented school buildings in Tafleeh, Zarga and Ruseifa, violations of the axial weights law, agricultural stations in Ramtha and the Royal Yachting Club in Aqaba. The session also dealt with government replies to proposals which among other things included the creation of an agricultural insurance company, studying the status of the Jordan Radio and Television Corporation, setting up a nursing college in Muta near Karak and the opening of a Civil Service Consumer Corporation branch in Ruseifa. The session was chaired by Deputy Speaker Atef Broush and attended by Deputy Prime Minister and Interior Minister Salem Masadeh and other cabinet members.

Army celebrates Muslim holy day

AMMAN (Petra) — Armed Forces Chief of Staff, General Fathi Abu Taleb, attended Wednesday at the general headquarters, the army's celebration of Israa Wal Miraj anniversary. The ceremony included recitals from the Holy Koran and a speech by the Mufti of the armed forces. The ceremony was attended by the chief of staff assistants, the inspector general and senior armed forces officers. Abu Taleb earlier paid field visits to reservist units where he was briefed by the commanders on the duties assigned to each of these formations and units. Abu Taleb, who conveyed to the recruits the greetings of His Majesty King Hussein, the armed forces supreme commander, lauded the recruits' enthusiasm and high morale.

March in Irbid hails Iraqis, Palestinians

IRBID (Petra) — The professional unions and the public committees in Irbid governorate Wednesday organised a march to voice support for the Iraqi and Palestinian people. The participants in the march chanted slogans denouncing the aggression on Iraq by the U.S. and the allied forces and calling on the Arab and Muslim peoples to support Iraq in its war against the infidel aggressors. They also hailed the Palestinian people's steadfastness in occupied territories.

VTC establishes training centre in Ghor Al Safi

AMMAN (J.T.) — The Labour Ministry's Vocational Training Corporation (VTC) has established a centre at the southern town of Ghor Al Safi at the cost of JD 250,000 with the help of the World Bank and the Industrial Development Bank of Jordan, the new centre's director, Fakhri Rawashdeh, announced Wednesday.

He said in his statement to the Jordan News Agency, Petra, that under agreements concluded with the Jordanian government the World Bank supplied 51 per cent of the cost of the centre while the Industrial Development Bank provided JD 100,000 of the total cost.

The new centre offers training to students from the southern regions of Jordan in auto-mechanics, electricity, plumbing and sanitary services, welding, woodwork and decorating work. The centre's capacity is 350 students who will undergo training for two years which includes practical work with local companies and businesses.

Rawashdeh said that the training is being offered free of charge to the students to recruit them for jobs in the local labour market and to help deal with the problem of unemployment by enabling the local people to find work and substitute non-Jordanian workers.

In pursuit of the same policy, the VTC has just graduated a batch of 16 Jordanians who participated in a training course in the work of bakeries. VTC director general, Ahmad Atwan, said that the graduates would substitute foreign and non-Jordanian Arab workers, mostly Egyptians, employed by the Kingdom's bakeries.

Atwan, who attended the graduation ceremony at the Yajouz Training Centre, announced that VTC centres have now embarked on a policy of providing training for job seekers in fields of work presently manned by foreigners.

This year the VTC is holding courses on bakery work at the centres of Yajouz, Hakama, Al Hashemieh and Ain Al Basha and gradually the VTC will increase and intensify courses of this nature in all parts of the country, Atwan announced.

He said that bakery owners have already welcomed the idea of employing the Jordanian job seekers who have had training in bakery work, and to help reduce the problem of unemployment in Jordan by employing Jordanians and not foreigners.

The Ministry of Labour last June announced that nearly 5,000 foreign workers were employed in Jordan's bakeries, and that only 130 of them held valid work permits. The ministry said that the VTC has prepared plans to help Jordanian job seekers to take the place of foreigners in this field.

According to Atwan, the VTC has introduced other training programmes in other fields like cutting marble and stone and preparing bricks for construction work and industrial dress-making, among others.

Last year the government introduced a law under which non-Jordanian Arab workers will pay JD 100 in fees for each work permit if they are not employed in farming or as nurses, who continue to pay JD 50. Non-Jordanian and non-Arab workers like maids pay JD 300 annually for their work permits.

Mohammad Kheir, director of the Yajouz VTC centre, spoke at the graduation ceremony, noting that the training courses are given free of charge and that trainees receive JD 30 a month as pocket money during their training period which lasts for about six months, and that the graduate's employment is guaranteed at local bakeries and other industrial and services sectors.

Atwan, who presented diplomas to the graduates, later opened a new training course for job seekers in the field of bakeries, which will be attended by 40 citizens.

Despite curbs, war reporters in Iraq tap mine of information

By Bernd Debusmann
Reuters

AMMAN — Saadoun Al Janabi Iraq's Ministry of Information and trouble reading the screen of correspondent's computer in a dark lobby of the Al Rashid hotel in Baghdad. "Hold your slight more steady, please, I see."

Scrolling up the story, he came to a paragraph that made him smile. It said residents and officials had given conflicting figures of civilian casualties caused by an air attack on a bridge packed with afternoon traffic in the town of Nasiriyah. You say figures on the 11 toll ranged from 47 to 180," Janabi said. "And the way you put it implies that you doubt higher figure. In that case, not just say at least 47?"

at suggestion could have come from an editor halfway around the world and few reporters would have argued. He said by the jovial official in the screening English-language reports going out of Baghdad, it underlines a wide gap between the perception of Iraqi information control and the reality on the ground.

asked of reporters returning from the country, the outside perception is: Confined to their hotel, correspondents are only taken out to see what the government wants them to see and hear only what the government wants them to hear from hand-picked citizens.

If that was the intention, things are not working out that way. Despite the curbs, reporters — particularly those familiar with Iraq — can have access to a wealth of information, both official and unofficial.

While unofficial information often cannot be reported, it helps balance a correspondent's assessment of official news. Eleven days after the Iraqi government asked all but one Western correspondent to leave the country, it allowed a group of 16 to return Jan. 30.

The ground rules they were given simple: No details on military or strategic targets, no mention of military movements or locations, every report to be screened by a censor before sending it and monitored while sending it by an official listening to despatches being dictated.

There was no doubt about the purpose of allowing reporters to return. The Government wanted them to report on civilian casualties and damage as wave after wave of allied bombing attacks destroyed Iraq's infrastructure and pushed the country back to the 19th century — without electricity, without telephones and with almost no motorised transport.

The only international communications links now functioning in Iraq are satellite phones brought in by news organisations. The telephones are assembled every morning in the garden of the Al Rashid hotel and locked away at night.

Peace team plans sit-in

AMMAN (J.T.) — Members of the Gulf Peace Team have invited the public to take part in a sit-in Friday to express solidarity with the victims of the Gulf war. The team announced that its members will be present Friday at a tent in front of the United Nations Development Programme (UNDP) building, Shmeisani from 9 a.m. till 6 p.m.

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It's a war crime

THE MASSACRE of hundreds of Iraqi civilians in their Baghdad bomb shelter early Wednesday is not only a deplorable, inhuman act that has to be strongly condemned by the world over. It is also a living testimony to the U.S.-led alliance's cruelty, cynicism and total disregard for human life in conducting this ugly and pointless war against Iraq.

The cruelty shows clearly in the path of war that the U.S. president has chosen as the way to settle his problem with the Iraqi leader, Saddam Hussein. The cynicism is evident in George Bush's statement two days ago, to the effect that President Saddam was spreading "myths and falsehoods" about Iraqi civilian casualties, in British Foreign Secretary Douglas Hurd's remark yesterday that the responsibility for the Al Amiriyah massacre lies so heavily on someone like Saddam Hussein, and in U.S. Brig. Gen. Richard Neal's contention in a briefing to journalists Wednesday that the targeted Baghdad bomb shelter was "a command and control facility." The total disregard for human life is all too obvious in the words and actions of the so-called allies, their political leaders in various capitals of the world and their military commanders in the Gulf.

Yesterday's genocide of innocent Iraqi civilians is in fact a war crime. First, it is a symbol of war that was supposed to be aimed at liberating Kuwait only to end up being directed against Iraq's civilian population and infrastructure. Second, it proves beyond a shadow of a doubt that allied bombing is indiscriminate, hitting schools, cars, mosques and churches, milk factories, bridges, municipal administration buildings, and now civilian bomb shelters.

It proves further that American superior technology, and what is said to be impeccable intelligence and pinpoint precision bombing are only as good as American and allied understanding of the problems and remedies in this part of the world, which is at best lacking in substance and form.

We hate to see blood used as capital in any cause. But unless this devastating tragedy serves as a reminder to the peoples of this world, especially those whose governments are part of the infamous coalition, that war is not the answer, then there will be little hope of ever bringing peace with justice to any area of the globe.

It is incumbent on all peace-loving nations and individuals to learn their lessons from the Baghdad massacre of yesterday. Their efforts on behalf of peace are the more needed, the more urgent in view of what can be expected to happen if this mad war drags on.

Arab, Muslim and human anger and anguish at the massacre is unlikely to subside in the coming days or even years. That sleepy, marginalised world body, otherwise known as the U.N., has got to be re-emerged, if the objective is indeed peace and justice in this region and elsewhere. Massacring civilians, with the highest-tech weapons and in cold blood, is the ultimate violation of international law and legitimacy and norms. It is the law of the jungle that the Americans & Co. are returning us to.

ARABIC PRESS COMMENTARIES

AL RAI daily maintained its bitter attack on Egypt which is paving the ground for the so-called new Arab-Zionist security zone in the Arab World. While the allied forces are maintaining their aggression on Iraq, its people and cultural heritage, Egypt is busy itself with the so-called security order for the Arab World in which Israel and the United States would play a key role, said the paper. Only the Arab countries aligned with the United States support the new arrangement in which Cairo wants Israel to be involved in security arrangements for the Arab countries, said the daily. Ever since the signing of the Camp David accords under Anwar Sadat, Egypt has been given the role of protecting U.S.-Zionist interests in the Arab World, and that is exactly the role it is now practising in the region, the paper noted. Any security arrangement in cooperation with the Zionist enemy, which is considered as a front line ally of the United States, can be of no benefit to the Arabs and would rather be a way of imposing humiliation on Arabs and Muslims of this region, the paper continued. What is happening now, said the daily, is an all-out confrontation between the new colonialist powers aiming to keep their forces in the Arabian Peninsula and to impose their hegemony on the Arab World and those true and honest Arabs who are fighting off this onslaught and aborting the U.S.-Zionist dreams in the Arab region. The paper said that what the forces of 28 nations cannot achieve through violence and aggression can by no means be accomplished through treachery and through conspiracies.

Sawt Al Saab daily blamed the United States for the failure of the non-aligned countries foreign ministers to reach a settlement for the Gulf crisis. The paper said that the Belgrade meeting came under United States pressures which foiled attempts by the Non-Aligned Movement to work out a lasting settlement to the Gulf conflict. Through blackmail and through intimidation and pressures Washington succeeded in aborting the meeting and its objectives for the sake of keeping the crisis alive so that it can achieve its ambitions, said the daily Wednesday. The non-aligned countries foreign ministers had planned to take a unanimous decision to interfere and come up with a settlement that would safeguard the interests of all parties involved in the conflict, but such efforts went in vain because Washington is determined to maintain its destruction of the Iraqi people and their future, the paper continued. President Bush who massed his forces in the Gulf and continues to destroy Iraq, is paving the ground for imposing a special formula of what he calls security arrangements for the region far worse than the Sykes-Picot treaty which perpetuated the fragmentation of the Arab World, the paper said. For this reason, Bush and his allies can by no means allow any initiative for peace in the Gulf succeed.

By His Royal Highness Crown Prince Hassan

THERE is no contradiction between "conscience" and "legitimacy." The flag of Kuwait still flies, as it should, on the Kuwaiti Embassy in Amman. We have repeatedly affirmed our total opposition to the acquisition of territory by force. Jordan has assiduously implemented the U.N. Security Council sanctions against Iraq at a great cost to its own economy. What Jordan did not do was to send its armed forces to join the coalition and fight in the war. Our critics conveniently forget these facts and many others. Our allegiance to peace does not put us in any camp except in that of peace.

No effort was spared by Jordan to warn about the destruction, both physical and psychological, that war will bring to the region. There are those who did not understand or did not like our message. Jordan was successively demoted by its critics from initially an apologist for Iraq, to tilting towards it, then to moving firmly into Iraq's camp, and finally to owing its allegiance to Iraq.

Since Aug. 2, Jordan has consistently worked for a peaceful solution to the Iraq-Kuwait crisis within the framework of international law and U.N. resolutions. Alas, such contributions were thwarted. As the recent speech of His Majesty (King Hussein) suggested, there is no contradiction between international legitimacy and an Arab contribution to peace. In fact, any regional settlement based on justice has to address all the peoples concerned.

Throughout the period since the outbreak of the crisis, Jordan's sole allegiance has been to peace. His Majesty King Hussein's latest speech is a cry of conscience. We helplessly see the ineluctable course of events that may very soon visit the horrors of weapons of mass destruction upon the entire region.

"The dignity of truth is lost with too many protestations." His Majesty's speech has been criticised for omitting references to Kuwait. Jordan has repeatedly stressed the need to mobilise all efforts in the search for a diplomatic solution based on international law. The very notion of finding a diplomatic solution based on legitimacy implies an Iraqi withdrawal from Kuwait. This has always been Jordan's official position.

As long as the Iraq-Iran war lasted, President Saddam was seen by the West as the party deserving support. That seems clear in the review of Iraq's



One day,
my son,
all this
will be yours...

relations with the West over the past decade. The United States Human Rights country reports are instructive. Up until last year, allegations of human rights violations in Iraq were passed over with bureaucratic skill. Positive developments were highlighted, e.g. the rights of minorities, the rights of women and secularisation.

At the U.N., meanwhile, Iraq was shielded from exposure to the rigours of the organisation's charter. Early resolutions on the Iraq-Iran war were classics in equivocation and abandonment of principles. Restoration of the status quo ante and the inadmissibility of the acquisition of territory by force, so prominent as justification for the collective punishment currently being inflicted on the Iraqi people, were not even mentioned at that stage.

The use of chemical weapons in that war was documented as far back as 1983. Yet no meaningful condemnation was made by the Security Council or any human rights group within the U.N. system. It was only after the Iraq-Iran ceasefire came into place, a period in which chemical weapons were not used, that President Saddam's image as a ruthless ruler who will not hesitate to use chemical weapons was being carefully

nurtured.

Iraq received extensive economic support from the world community during its war with Iran. By the end of the war, credits to Iraq are reported to have reached \$80 billion, provided mainly from the West and from Arab oil countries.

Jordan is not an apologist for any, but there are certain pertinent facts about the Iraq-Kuwait dispute that have to be remembered:

• Historically, there have been no fewer than 22 active border disputes in the Gulf region since 1900, and no fewer than 21 in which redress was sought by military force.

• While Kuwait's membership of the community of nations as an independent and sovereign state is beyond dispute, it cannot be said that Iraqi territorial claims on some Kuwaiti territory are not without foundation. These claims predate President Saddam, and it is a fact that he had taken more steps to finalise border delimitations than any of his predecessors.

• There is no doubt that Iraq's complaints about Kuwaiti over-production of oil were genuinely and bitterly felt. Evidence that the Kuwaitis were over-producing in violation of existing OPEC agreements is incontestable. It is equally incontestable that the catas-

trophic effects of such over-production on Iraq's economy — and ultimately on the very integrity of the state — could not have escaped the notice of the Kuwaiti authorities. Did greed prevail over good sense or was there an intentional attempt to weaken Iraq? If the latter is the case, as some evidence suggests, would it be too inappropriate to speak of economic aggression, a notion which in our interdependent world can be as destabilising as armed aggression?

On the occasions on which President Saddam was approached directly without intimidation, he was always compliant. He promised His Majesty King Hussein to withdraw from Kuwait immediately after the Iraqi invasion. That solution would have prevented a local dispute from becoming an international crisis. But it was undercut by Arab League and Security Council condemnation of Iraq. That marked the beginning of the escalation.

No one can say with a clear conscience that peaceful means were exhausted. In the course of almost six months of crisis characterized by name calling, military preparations and escalation of demands (for example Mrs. Thatcher's "Sanctions will not be lifted even if Iraq withdraws") there was only one direct meeting be-

tween the U.S. and Iraq — on Jan. 9. By then, it was too late. The logic of war had taken on a life of its own and the meeting was meant for different audiences, Congress on the one hand and the Arab masses on the other. There were no genuine negotiations.

Despite this, the Iraqis never completely locked the door against a peaceful solution. Thus, for example, in his Jan. 13 meeting the U.N. Secretary General, President Saddam suggested that Iraq would be ready to "cooperate" if there was a comprehensive application of international legality.

Jordan, although contiguous to Iraq, did not evolve significant economic relations with Iraq until the 1980s. Saudi Arabia and Kuwait have been the main regional economic partners of Jordan. Both countries absorbed the larger part of Jordanian migrant labour, and provided the main markets for Jordanian agricultural exports.

Significant economic linkages between Jordan and Iraq were in fact a by-product of the Iraq-Iran war. They began when Basra, Iraq's only outlet to the sea, was closed, forcing the Iraqis to seek alternative ports for the huge supplies needed to sustain the war.

Syria denied Iraq the use of its Mediterranean ports, which would have provided a second

best to Basra, and closed Iraq's only oil pipeline. In the event, Kuwait and Saudi Arabia began pumping oil on Iraq's behalf, providing Iraq with credit to prevent an Iranian takeover of the Gulf.

Meanwhile, Jordan's port of Aqaba became one of two main substitutes for Basra (Kuwait being the other). Road tankers were used to carry Iraqi crude across the desert from Iraq for re-exportation through Aqaba. Jordan additionally provided a variety of supplies to Iraq on a credit basis. All these factors led to a sharp increase in the volume of trade between Iraq and Jordan, which was negligible prior to the Iraq-Iran war. As the war progressed and Iraq could not meet its repayment obligations to Jordan, it offered oil in return. Jordan, which was hard-pressed for foreign exchange, consequently took Iraqi crude in repayment of Iraqi debts.

But Jordan switched back to Saudi crude after the eruption of Iraq-Kuwait crisis in August 1990. Imports through the pipeline shot up to \$22 million during September 1990. But its closure by the Saudi authorities forced Jordan to rely once again on imports from Iraq. The Sanctions Committee of the Security Council realised Jordan had no alternative.

Sanctions, imposed by the Security Council, severely disrupted economic linkages between Jordan and Iraq. Though those ties were triggered by the Iraq-Iran war, they were based on a natural but long-forgotten pattern of complementarities. Through Jordan, Iraq can have access to the Red Sea. Jordan's rapidly expanding agricultural and manufacturing sectors have in Iraq a sizeable and nearby market of about 17 million people. Iraq is a major oil exporter whereas Jordan relies on oil imports. Jordanian contracting firms have a competitive edge in a market as close as Iraq. Investment programmes in Iraq provide attractive job opportunities for Jordanian surplus labour.

Despite the disruption caused by sanctions, Jordanian economic complementarities may be swiftly reactivated in a postwar scenario. This central spine of the Arab east, with its human and natural resources, can become a driving force in the region's reconstruction.

The current tragedy unfolding in the Middle East has not stopped us in Jordan from having a vision of peace and prosperity based on law and justice. During the 43 years of Arab-Israeli conflict, we similarly never did lose hope.

LETTERS

Truth and objectivity

The following is an open letter to the BBC news editor from a Jordanian citizen who addressed a copy to the editor of the Jordan Times.

Dear Sir/Madam,

With all due respect to the BBC World Service, I sadly write to say that I was disappointed at the way BBC commented on His Majesty's speech delivered on television on Feb. 2.

The presenter of 24 Hours emphasised the sharp tone of the speech and was surprised that King Hussein criticised the West. He also said that King Hussein shouldn't try to go far in his position on the Gulf crisis. Well, let me inform you that it's the West that has gone too far with its brutal aggression against the civilian population of Iraq. The human people in Arab countries feel with those civilians to the extent that anger is evoked at the injustice being done. If a sharp tone is what it takes to end this massacre, then let it be. The West has taught us that might is right any way so why not use a sharp tone.

Iraq's invasion of Kuwait may be a mistake, but that doesn't justify the escalation of the crisis by the United Kingdom and the United States. They are puppets in the hands of Zionism. This brings about another point. Israel, which is considered as an innocent bystander (although you probably know as much as I do, that they are the engineers behind this war if one looks closely enough at the analogies between this war and those in 1967, 1956) has received so much support after being hit by Iraqi missiles because some innocent civilians of this "uninvolved" country were hurt. What about the Jordanians who were bombed out of their tanks and out of their cars while fleeing the war in Kuwait. They came from a country that supports Iraq as much as Israel, in the opinion of the West, support the allied forces.

I'm sorry to tell you, that the BBC hasn't been objective in its coverage of events in the Gulf. And I have noticed that they have been biased to the coalition forces. It is sad when media becomes a force of destroying humanity and cultural closeness instead of promoting it.

You keep bringing news of the coalition's sorties and air raids while ignoring the criminal murder of civilians in Iraqi towns and villages.

It may come to you as a surprise, but there are, believe it or not, human civilians in Iraq and not just in Israel. Why don't they get similar sympathy?

I hope the BBC can be more neutral in conveying events of the war and bring views of both sides without criticising the views of Arabs in a manner as which implies that what the coalition is doing is right, otherwise, it shouldn't make a difference whether you had a correspondent in Baghdad or not, since you are not really transmitting news, truthfully, objectively and without bias.

Mohammad Jalal,
Amman.

Alarmed and concerned

The following is a copy of a letter addressed to the German Foreign Minister Mr. Hans-Dietrich Genscher who arrives in Amman today on an official visit to the Kingdom. A copy of the letter was made available to the Jordan Times.

H.E. The Minister of Foreign Affairs
of the Federal Republic of Germany
Mr. Hans-Dietrich Genscher

Your Excellency,

We, German women who have lived in the Middle East for many years, address you once more (see our Open Letter of October 23rd, 1990).

For four weeks now the hot war is raging in the Gulf, Iraq is being systematically destroyed, its civilian population ruthlessly killed.

We, as Germans, saw our sole consolation in the fact that the Federal Republic of Germany was not taking part in this war of many Germans spontaneously demonstrated for peace.

Now, the German government felt obliged not only to support the Gulf war with billions of marks but also to lend massive financial and military assistance to Israel.

We are shocked and ashamed.

We Germans who have two world wars on our conscience, are indeed more responsible for world peace than other nations. This is why we must take courage to say an outspoken NO, whenever the attempt is made to solve conflicts with military means, even when this is initiated by "the good guys" by friends and allies.

This is particularly true in the age of atomic bombs and weapons of mass destruction. Mr. Genscher, we are afraid that the mechanism of this insane war will lead to the use of atomic bombs — as "a more expedient ultimate solution."

Did you know that

— the Palestinians have been waiting for 42 years for the U.N. to find and enforce a just solution to the Palestine problem which they themselves have created in the first place by passing U.N. Resolution 181 (partition of Palestine into a Jewish and an Arab state with special international status for Jerusalem)?

— Israel has adhered to NONE of the U.N. Resolutions concerning itself, since its creation?

— Up to now, Israel has waged 5 wars of conquest against its Arab neighbours (1948/49, 1956, 1973, 1982) and that even the Gulf war has come about at the instigation of Israel (objective: elimination of an Arab power which might call in question Israel's military superiority in the Middle East)?

— In the Israeli-occupied territories (in the West Bank for 23 years, in Gaza for 36 years), human beings are being robbed of their human dignity and all their rights, they are arbitrarily killed, wounded, crippled, expelled, imprisoned, tortured, their homes and trees destroyed, their land (and water) annexed; they are being denied their right to live a life in dignity, freedom and self-determination — in spite of their readiness for compromise?

— Recently, a Minister was included into the Israeli cabinet

who is ill-known for pushing forward the "transfer of all Palestinians" as "the ultimate solution of the Palestinian question?"

— Prime Minister Yitzhak Shamir — who demands you to be ashamed — started his political career as a terrorist?

— Since the outbreak of war, 1.75 million Palestinians are suffering under strict curfew?

— 17,000 political prisoners of Ansar III camp are being used as "human shields" to protect the Israeli nuclear installations Demona?

— Israel has never defined its final future borders to the East?

— Germany bears as great a responsibility towards the Palestinians as towards the Jews, because Israel was founded at their expense (& on their soil) — as exploitation and annihilation of Jewish sufferings on German soil?

We call for:

— An immediate ceasefire

— Stopping any kind of support to the Gulf war, before it is too late, the Middle East region totally destroyed and damage done to mankind and nature that could never be repaired

— The International Peace Conference to solve all Middle East conflicts through participation of all countries of the region

— Unwavering support for the realization of international law, all U.N. Resolutions, and Human Rights for all — without any exception

— Reduction of all weapons of mass destruction as part of a balanced detente policy

— Observing strictly the provision "no weapons to crisis areas" and prohibition of armament industry on principle

— Instead: priority to the protection of the environment worldwide as the prerequisite for human life

— Increased engagement for the creation of an independent European peace-policy

— Support of the new Arab democracies in Jordan, Yemen, Tunisia, and Algeria

— The media to come to their senses and remember their function to report truthfully as well as their role as bridges of understanding between different peoples, cultures, and religions.

We are glad you have come to Jordan, too, during your present trip to the Middle East. As an experienced politician you would be interested in receiving comprehensive first-hand information about the complex problems of the Middle East. Jordan is the best place to do so, having adhered to the concept of a peaceful solution as a necessity and realistic goal, from the very beginning of the crisis.

Thanking you for your interest and hoping to receive an answer this time — "May Peace Be Upon Us All,"

Alarmed and concerned German
Women in Jordan
44 signatures

Jordan Times WEEKENDER

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Deep debate over temporary marriage in Iran

By Eric Hall
Reuters

TEHRAN — Morally outraged, the neighbours of Dow Habibi finally banged her door in Tehran and demanded that she stop inviting her young man to stay overnight.

But their accusations failed to embarrass Mrs. Habibi (not her real name) pulled out her certificate of temporary Islamic marriage.

The incident highlights a public debate raging in the Islamic Republic of Iran over government decision to allow single and widowed Iranians to enter temporary marriages, called *Mot'e* in Islamic law.

Two sad facts lie behind the government's move:

— Economic hardship is forcing young Iranians to marry late.

— Countless women, widowed by the 1980-86 war with Iraq, are without partners to provide them economic support. Many are poverty-stricken.

For both categories, *Mot'e* offers a solution.

But the idea of temporary marriage conflicts with the moralistic fervour that has gripped Iran since the 1979 Islamic Revolution.

Islamic street committees who claim to police the country's moral standards have accused men and women who do not cover themselves in headscarves in public.

Iran's strict Islamic Law provides for 74 lashes for women who violate a dress code which bans make-up or allows them to show only their face and hands.

The government has sought recently to stop the most zealous street committees,

whose actions Iranians say seriously compound the problems of sexual frustration.

"At times you were not safe with your wife," said one Tehran worker.

Mot'e is enshrined in holy law, according to interpretation of the Koran by Iran's majority Shi'ite Muslim sect. Sunnis, a majority sect in most other Muslim countries, do not allow it.

President Ali Akbar Hashemi Rafsanjani announced the *Mot'e* plan at a weekly prayer meeting in Tehran on Dec. 1, saying:

"Our youth these days have to wait until they are 25 or 30 to have income and a residence, to satiate their sexual needs. And we all know that kids after 15 have that need."

"There are hundreds of thousands, perhaps millions of widows, divorced women who are left single, and because of social norms they remain like that," he added.

But strong objections have come from radical Iranian Muslims, who take a puritanical view of sex, some conservative clerics — and parents and potential bridegrooms of all political persuasions in a society which demands that a bride must be a virgin.

"I was shaken by what I heard," wrote radical female commentator Gohar Keshavarz in the daily *Kayhan* newspaper. She added: "I did not know that Islamic women should step forward and offer their bodies to solve the problems in our society."

"Real marriage is permanent marriage. This temporary marriage will eventually add to our social problems," said Arafah Sadiqi, a radical politician and one of only four women deputies in parliament.



Rafsanjani: "While avoiding any extremes, we must have a rational attitude towards women's presence in society."

But Rafsanjani's move is more popular with the young — 45 per cent of the population is under 15. "Rafsanjani alienated the pious but he has appealed directly to the young," said one Tehran liberal.

To prevent an excuse for easy sex, Rafsanjani said *Mot'e* does not apply to married men, although some theologians suggest a literal reading of scriptures would allow even this.

Temporary marriages must also be registered at public notary offices with details of

the length of contract, divisions of money and property and provisions for any children.

"And women who have not married before still need their father's permission for a temporary marriage — which is highly unlikely."

An important aspect of *Mot'e* is that it does not legally insist that the woman live with the man, thus allowing a widow to preserve an independent household but have an extra income.

The *Mot'e* idea has powerful supporters. "We don't

care what the Sunnis say. It was practised during the Prophet Mohammad's lifetime," said Chief Justice Hojatolislam Mojtahadi.

The cleric Muhammad Javad Hojatol Kermani, a close adviser to Rafsanjani and a realist, told critics: "Please remember that this is a solution for men and women who, if they do not follow *Mot'e*, will commit sin. How do you suggest that people who have set alight their God-given passion should act?"

President Rafsanjani returned to the subject of

women at a seminar this week on their proper role and attire.

He appealed for "greater freedom for Muslim women, saying, 'while avoiding any extremes, we must have a rational attitude towards women's presence in society.'"

"It is not merely the corrupt Western symbols in society which are dangerous for women but what really annoys them today is the absence of complete possibilities for their participation in social scenes due to prejudices and wrong traditions."

Diana marks decade as royal superstar

By Anne Senior
Reuters

LONDON — A secret tryst, a scandal dinner and a proposal.

This romantic moment 10 years ago launched coy teenager Lady Diana Spencer as a royal superstar and brought a touch of Hollywood glamour to the British monarchy.

Diana became the idol of millions during her meteoric rise from relative obscurity to "fairy tale" cathedral wedding to Britain's Prince Charles.

She has come a long way since the marriage proposal over dinner at Buckingham Palace in early February 1981, paving on her aristocratic background to become a seasoned royal performer and ad-setter.

Royal commentators say Princess Diana has transformed the image of the British monarchy, boosting its global appeal with her fashion sense and film-star charisma.

"If this monarchy lasts she will be cited by historians as a turning point," said Arnold Brooks-Baker, an ardent royalist and editor of the *British Directory* Burke's page.

The combination of a glamorous princess and an earnest prince is the best one I have hoped for," he said.

Charles ever finding a partner with all that was required of a future queen — charm, discretion, a sense of duty and an absence of previous lovers.

Even Charles could not believe his luck when he did, saying in a pre-wedding interview he was amazed that 19-year-old Diana was brave enough to accept his proposal.

Their glittering state wedding in July 1981 was a celebration of British heritage, generating a royalist fervour that peaked again just

under a year later when Diana gave birth to a son to carry on the royal line, Prince William. A second son, called Prince Henry but known as Harry, was born in 1984.

Diana brought to the monarchy the elements needed for a gripping family saga — romance and glamour — according to an analysis last year in the trade magazine *Marketing Week*.

"Thanks to trendy Di, the royals are now the ultimate aspirational fantasy," the

magazine said.

But some, including Charles himself, have lamented the royals' star quality and warned that the incessant gossip about their private lives could damage the institution they represent.

In a recent interview with French television, Charles complained the media was turning the monarchy into a soap opera that threatened to erode centuries of royal mystique.

Ironically his own wife has become the subject of some of the gossip-hungry media's most inventive speculation.

According to the tabloids Diana has, over the years: ...suffered a nervous breakdown... had her nose altered... wrestled with alcoholism... developed a slimming disease... and fallen out of love with her husband, 12 years her senior.

Britain was gripped by divorce rumours in 1987 but these subsided amid reports of an amicable agreement to stay together out of duty to the monarchy and the couple's children.

In a rare public speech in 1986, Diana stressed the importance of bringing up children in a stable family. "The pressures and demands on all of us are enormous," she said.

But in her 10 years in the limelight, Diana has given few clues to her private thoughts, making more headlines with her outfits and hairstyles than anything else.

Feminists have complained



Princess Diana, the most gawkiest-at celebrity.

that Diana's scrupulous attention to personal appearance and her self-deprecating manner — she says she is intellectually "thick as a plank" — are a throwback to the past, not something for Britain to be proud of.

"In the eager hands of fashion designers, crimpers and cosmeticians trying to hitch their names to her stardom she's becoming a living, daily re-cycled Barbie doll," wrote one newspaper columnist in the mid 1980s.

One woman who has closely scrutinised Diana over the years feels she has become almost too good at being a princess.

"From the 'shy Di' photographed with the sun shining through her skirt she's become completely polished.

It's almost a shame," said Julie Woodbridge, a professional Diana look-alike.

But Diana's work for charity, her protectiveness of her family and avoidance of controversy have won her respect even from the critics, who have been scathing about the more flamboyant Duchess of York, wife of Charles's brother Andrew.

Although Diana is the most widely publicised royal in Britain, she is not the most popular. A survey last year put her fourth in the popularity table behind the queen, the queen mother, and Prince Charles.

With a popularity rating of 84 per cent, she tied with sister-in-law Princess Anne — a hard-working, unglamorous royal whose hairstyle has not changed in years.

Dima's courage

By E. Yaghi

FOR many years, Jordan has been an intellectual centre as well as a crossroads of different norms of thought and behaviour. Because of Jordan's geographical location and its neutrality during the Gulf crisis and the present Gulf war, many journalists from all over the world have converged here in order to disseminate and evaluate the latest information concerning current Gulf events.

Recently, Jordan has proved to be not only a hub for journalists, but also a stopover for peace activists who were on their way to Iraq on missions of peace. Most of these peace activists had their own lives and professions before the Gulf conflict but they felt it a moral obligation to try to prevent a tragic war.

Peace activists are brave persons who because of their convictions, place themselves in a position of sacrifice. One very special member of the Gulf peace team, Dima Lawrence, honoured Jordan with her presence.

Anyone who knows Dima will agree that she is very unique. Her sincerity and sensitivity plus her sympathy for the Iraqis as well as Palestinians glows on her face and her deep bluish-green eyes flicker with compassion. There seems to be a continuous mist floating in those magnetic eyes for the never ending grievances of the Arab people.

Dima touches all who meet her with her obvious feelings of concern for the victims of the Gulf war. Her sweetness is worn with a magic flare. She is dainty and petit yet her great courage surpasses her physique. When asked why she decided to become a member of the Gulf peace team and to go to the dangerous peace camp which is situated near the Iraqi-Saudi border in Iraq, she stated, "I could not tolerate being one of many protesters in so many demonstrations. The American government wasn't listening to us so we decided to go on a peace mission to Baghdad in order to be felt."

Thus, Dima went to the peace camp. The building she and others stayed in used to be a way station for Muslim pilgrims on their way to Mecca. She described the conditions of the camp as "harsh." She slept on the cold cement floor in her sleeping bag. While there in the camp, she was assured that all the peace activists were firmly resolved in their mission of peace.

When the United Nations' deadline for Iraq to withdraw from Kuwait passed and there was no outbreak of fighting, Dima thought the threat had passed. She left the peace camp on Jan. 16 and made her way to Baghdad. Early Jan. 17, she was awakened by the fierce American-led bombing of the citizens of Baghdad. She fled the building she was staying in and ran outside. There in the black night she saw the sky lit up in red, blue and yellow lights as destruction fell on an ancient and peaceful capital. Dima's life, like those of all other Iraqis, was hanging on a thin thread. But, while the bombs were falling, she thought: I wondered who those bombs were falling on and I worried about the babies, children, women, men and elderly people that would either die or be injured. She had forgotten to fear for her own safety.

Understandably, the Iraqis have every right to hate their aggressors, but Dima was amazed at the kindness of the Iraqi people. She was taken to the comparative safety of Al Rashid Hotel "because they have the best bomb shelter in Baghdad." There she sat in the midst of the Iraqis who had sought refuge in the shelter.

Their courage astounded her and she noticed their unbiased compassion for all fellow humans regardless of their country of origin. "While she lay sleeping, someone thoughtfully covered her. She was grateful. She was not shocked at the Iraqi behaviour, but rather that President Bush had taken that final and horrible step in starting the Gulf war."

She was fortunate to escape the bombings and came to Amman where she anxiously waited at the Amoun Hotel for news of the other members of the Gulf peace team. Finally, all members of the team, around 84, were able to join Dima in safety. They have left the terror of war and the ruthless devastation of the American-led coalition. The group's mission was one of peace and to remain neutral. Unofficially, Dima has very deep feelings of her own and such remarkable opinions. "I consider it a totally immoral posture on the part of the Israelis. Where are the religious leaders of Israel? Israel is making a great profit from this war. No nation should profit on the misery of another nation or people."

God willing, Dima has tried and will continue to try to promote a real and accurate understanding of the Arab people. She also feels there is a definite linkage between the Palestine problem, the Iraqi occupation of Kuwait and the Gulf war. She said, "If there is justice in Palestine, perhaps there can be hope for others as well."

She knows what she is talking about for she is the programme coordinator of the Palestine Human Rights Campaign in Chicago. She has been to Palestine and lived in Jerusalem. Around her neck hangs a chain on which is centred a trinket map of Palestine. Because of her love and devotion to these gallant people, she was made an honorary member of Palestine. However, due to her heroic efforts to aid the Palestinian cause, she had been threatened. Nevertheless, she left her job to go on her mission of peace because she felt it her moral duty to try to stop the war. Love and peace are written on her face and carried in her heart. All who are fortunate enough to know Dima walk away gifted with her love and concern. She views the Palestinian people as an endangered nation.

There is little left of democracy in America. Arab Americans are being harassed. The media is being controlled by giant conglomerates who own the consumer's thoughts. Dima asks, "Is there really a functioning democracy in America? The media reflects government policy. What is read in the newspapers is already edited and biased."

Dima Lawrence soon will leave Jordan and return to her job and home. Her presence has been a blessing, her friendship a gift of love. Her heart is resolved. She is a very brave woman who dared to care. May God grant her peace in her life and good luck and happiness wherever she goes.

Thoughts for this week

History is, indeed, little more than the register of the crimes, follies and misfortunes of mankind
— Edward Gibbon, English historian (1737-1794).

When men speak ill of thee, live so as nobody may believe them
— Plato, Greek philosopher (427 B.C.-317 B.C.).

Never give in, never, never, never, never
— Sir Winston Churchill, British statesman (1874-1965).

Revenge does us more harm than the injury itself
— John Lubbock, English astronomer-mathematician (1803-1865).

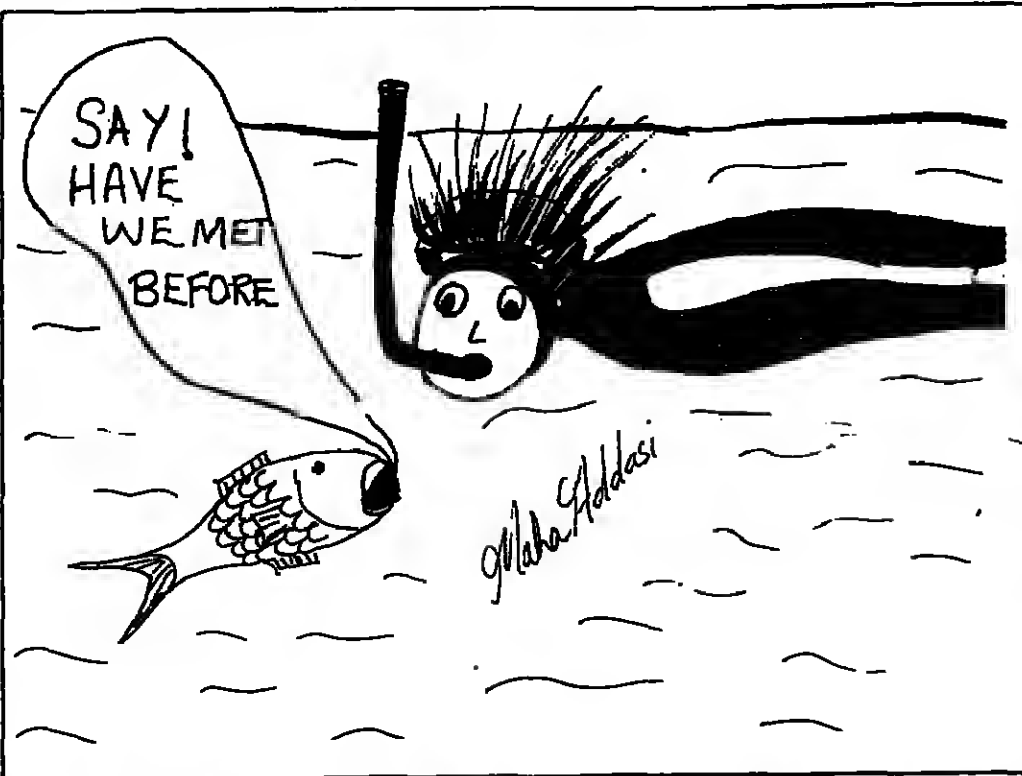
A visit to the dentist

By Maha Addasi

There are two things in life that remain a mystery to me. One is why do people check their handkerchiefs after they've blown their noses in them, and the other is why do most dentists keep fish aquariums in their clinics?

I can not answer the first question, however, the answer for the second is as follows: According to psychiatrist, watching fish swim is supposed to calm the nerves. But, how soothing is a swimming goldfish when there is a tooth drill singing away in the background waiting for you? That is of course along with the smell of antiseptic that hits your nostrils reminding you of white coats, injections and root canals. While you watch those fish swim, your stomach is turning with absolute terror. But you are supposed to be terrified in a "soothed" way, because of the fish, you know. Things don't look any brighter when you see the look on the secretary's face who is usually so welcoming, as though beaconing you into the dentist's domain, usually wearing a smug grin that you just want to go over and wipe right off her face.

You hope that by painting the visit to the dentist black for yourself things would turn out better. Fat chance. Things are exactly the same each and every time. When your turn comes you are still confused about where to concentrate your line of vision while your dentist is working on your teeth. Ears? Throat? Mask? Mole? And it goes without fail. The minute the suction tube, the mirror, the cleaning instruments, the gauze and the drill are used, in unison, your dentist asks you: "Which tooth was it again?" At



which time you gag on an answer and your voice sounds like it is coming from an alien. Do not worry though. Your dentist has mastered the martian language of "Choke talk."

Then it is time to gargle with that pink solution. Personally, I do not always know whether I should keep gargling until everything in the cup is gone or whether I should gargle a few times. After all this is my chance to prove to my dentist that I really care for my teeth and spend enough time keeping them clean. So I usually gargle till all the pink liquid disappears down the sink. It is, of course, a difficult task to gargle considering half of your mouth practically does not obey the signals sent to it from the brain, as it is numbed by the anesthetic. Then you watch as the nurse rolls her eyes and places another pink tablet in the cup.

Eventually, after everything has been splashed on

your face and in your eyes you are told your teeth are fine. Of course all your makeup has disappeared and your dentist has discovered how you "really" look. (This is why I advise you to go to a dentist in the furthest corner of the country so that you minimise the chances of your seeing or ever bumping into your dentist in a public place.)

If you do bump into him or her, you are doomed. Let us say you are at a reception and you are standing there talking with friends when suddenly you see your dentist diving towards you.

"Well, hello there," your dentist says.

"Hi," you say through clenched teeth.

"I almost didn't recognise you," your dentist says.

"Oh," you say, praying that your dentist would not expand on that comment, especially in front of the group with you. (However if you are female and your

dentist is too, do not hold your breath.)

Eventually time heals all, and you completely forget about your last visit to the dentist. But then your feet drag you back yet again to go through all the agony of the times before.

You go back and nothing has changed. There is a different secretary but, of course, you still want to wipe that self-satisfied grin off her face, the place reeks of antiseptic, the drill is droning along in the back room and the goldfish which have grown and multiplied are still swimming around "soothingly".

This time you are going to be smarter. You are going to ask that the fish be taken inside and "calm your nerves" while your dentist works on your teeth. At least then you would not worry where to keep your line of vision. And fish don't come up to you at parties telling you they did not recognise you. Now that is soothing.

Adventurers flirt with fear and risk to make dreams come true

By Michael Perry
Reuters

SYDNEY — Christopher Columbus, Sir Edmund Hillary and Scott of the Antarctic have all been immortalised for risking their necks in pursuit of a dream.

So what drives someone to become an adventurer? "You have to be totally selfish," said American Jack Boye, a highly decorated Vietnam War veteran and former Wall Street stockbroker who is now on the third leg of the Boc challenge solo round the world yacht race.

"The people that are important to you are the ones that suffer, but hopefully my children will understand through what I do that if they push their lives a little they too can have a good life," Boye told Reuters.

"Life is only the sum of your experiences. It's not the money you'll have. At the end when you die, you die alone."

Boye's philosophy has been shaped by a remarkable life. After giving up a promising football career "to see what a war was like" he left

Vietnam four and a half years later a commander in the airborne infantry with a Silver Star and five Bronze Stars.

The took on Wall Street with the same gusto and through his stockbroking firm, legend Securities, made a fortune. But what he saw in 1987 made him turn his back on the financial world.

"After the crash, Wall Street became carnivorous, every company that was going out of business took advantage of every opportunity to try and save itself," Boye said.

"I'll starve before I go back there. It is evil and dishonest. It sucks. I wasted 20 years of my life there. It is a snake pit."

Twenty-five sailors started the BOC, a gruelling 7,000 mile (11,000 kilometres) race from Newport, Rhode Island in the United States to Cape Town in South Africa, Sydney in Australia, Punta Del Este in Uruguay and back to Newport.

Three of the 21 sailors left, three epitomes especially the spirit of adventure the race represents, because they are

not professional sailors. All three — Isabelle Autissier of France, Australian Don McIntyre and Boye — have entered their first, and maybe last BOC, to fulfil a dream.

"I have wanted to sail around the world since I was a little girl," said Autissier, a part-time agricultural engineer. "We need to dream in our society because it is not so nice or exciting."

"You don't have to be superhuman to do these things, you just need an intense desire," said Australian Don McIntyre, a marine supplier.

McIntyre made the final commitment to compete after meeting boyhood hero, Britain's Robin Knox-Johnston, the first person to sail solo, non-stop round the world.

"He was a very ordinary person and that made me realise if he could do it so could I. My only problem was money — I had none," McIntyre is \$270,000 in debt, after sailing the first two legs without a sponsor.

Boye was only a last minute entry in the BOC, partly to raise money for the street kids of New York. He has

already attracted about \$25,000 in donations.

"Hey, it's just another adventure. I am going back to start a charity when there's a worldwide recession. They say it can't be done. Bullshit," Boye said.

The mixture of self-indulgence and altruism seems typical of BOC sailors.

"The BOC is an incredibly materialistic and capitalistic venture, because you have to somehow come up with this cross between a spaceship and submarine, which costs you fortune, but it makes you realise people are everything," McIntyre said.

"I don't know how Maggie, my wife, puts up with it. The stress is incredible. If I had a dollar for every tear she has shed I'd be a millionaire."

While they admit fear is part of the game — "if you're not scared then you're a fool," Boye says — the sailors deny the sole thrill is the knowledge they are dying with death.

"You don't want to risk your life — the danger is a consequence of the challenge, not the challenge," said Autissier.

THIS WEEK IN HISTORY

Thursday, Feb. 14

1797 — British fleet under John Jervis and Horatio Nelson defeat Spanish off Cape Saint Vincent.

1846 — Uprising in Cracow Republic spreads swiftly throughout Poland.

1893 — Hawaii is annexed by treaty to the United States.

1929 — Seven hoodlums, rivals of Al Capone gang in Chicago, Illinois, are murdered in garage in what becomes known as "Saint Valentine's Day Massacre."

1943 — Soviet forces recapture Rostov from Germans in World War II.

1950 — Soviet Union and China sign 30-year treaty in Moscow.

1956 — Soviet Premier Nikita Khrushchev denounces Joseph Stalin's policies at Soviet Communist Party conference.

1972 — U.S. trade restrictions against China are relaxed, putting China on same basis as Soviet Union.

1976 — Nigerian government confirms that nation's head of state, General Murtala Ramat Muhammad, was assassinated at start of attempted coup d'etat.

1978 — U.S. government announces plans to sell billions of dollars worth of arms to Egypt and Saudi Arabia as well as to Israel, saying it will maintain military balance in Middle East.

1988 — Three officers of Yasser Arafat's mainline group in Palestine Liberation Organisation are killed in Cyprus when their body-trapped car explodes.

1989 — Belgium's former Prime Minister Paul Vanden Boeynants returns home after family pays ransom one month after his kidnapping.

1990 — Indian Airlines passenger jet crashes on landing, killing 91 people.

Friday, Feb. 15

1763 — Peace treaty of Hubertusberg between Prussia and Austria.

Saturday, Feb. 16

1798 — Roman Republic is proclaimed by French after capture of Rome, and Pope Pius VI refuses to surrender temporal power and leaves Rome for Valencia.

1806 — Franco-Prussian treaty against Britain, whereby Prussia closes her ports to British ships.

1894 — France and Germany reach agreement on boundaries between French Congo and Cameroons.

1897 — Allied powers land forces on Crete.

1898 — U.S. battleship Maine is blown up in Havana Harbour in Cuba.

1942 — Singapore surrenders to Japanese forces in World War II.

1944 — U.S. troops complete reconquest of Solomon Islands in Pacific Ocean in World War II; Nearly 1,000 British bombers pound Berlin, Germany.

1965 — China's Foreign Minister Chen Yi says in Peking that peaceful coexistence with United States is out of the question.

1973 — United States and Cuba sign agreement calling for prosecution or extradition of hijackers of airplanes and ships.

1978 — Agreement is announced in Rhodesia to bring blacks into key roles in government of Prime Minister Ian Smith.

1986 — Philippines National Assembly officially proclaims Ferdinand Marcos as president for another six years, after all opposition members walk out in protest.

1988 — Austria's President Kurt Waldheim, accused of having Nazi past, flatly rejects widespread calls for his resignation.

1989 — Afghan guerrilla leaders propose plan for interim government as Soviet Union ends nine-year military intervention in Afghanistan.

1990 — Britain and Argentina restore diplomatic relations, broken off during the 1982 Falkland Islands War.

Sunday, Feb. 17

1808 — France invades Spain.

1871 — Franco-Prussian war ends in defeat for France.

1873 — Republic is proclaimed in Spain.

1918 — England's port of Dover is bombarded by German submarine in World War I.

1933 — Czechoslovakia, Romania and Yugoslavia, fearing German threats, reorganise little entente with permanent council.

1942 — German submarines fire upon oil refineries in Aruba, Dutch West Indies, during World War II.

1945 — Massive U.S. air raids on Tokyo begin in World War II.

1953 — South Africa institutes emergency powers under public safety bill.

1959 — Fidel Castro becomes premier of Cuba.

1962 — Anti-government riots break out in Georgetown, British Guiana.

1970 — Moscow says Arab nations will get "necessary support" from Soviet Union in their conflict with Israel.

1977 — Anglican archbishop of Uganda and two government ministers are arrested in alleged plot to overthrow Ugandan President Idi Amin.

1978 — Japan and China sign \$20 billion trade pact in Peking.

1986 — French warplanes bomb Libyan airfield in northern Chad used as support centre for rebels in their offensive against President Hissene Habre's government.

1988 — At least 5 people are killed and 10 wounded when two hand grenades explode at crowded Hindu temple during major festival.

1989 — Barrage of rockets hits two Afghan cities after last Soviet troops leave Afghanistan.

1990 — African National Congress says it is willing to meet with South African President F.W. de Klerk to discuss

opening talks on ending the group's guerrilla war against apartheid.

1568 — Turkey's Sultan Selim II makes peace with Holy Roman Emperor Maximilian II.

1670 — France signs defensive alliance with Bavaria.

1720 — Peace treaty between Quadruple Alliance and Spain is signed.

1813 — Prussia's Frederick William III declares war on France.

1852 — Repressive measures are adopted in France, including press censorship.

1897 — Britain rejects Austro-Russian proposal for blockade of Piraeus in Greece.

1916 — British and French forces complete capture of Germany's African colony of Cameroon during World War I.

1934 — Belgium's King Albert I is killed while mountain climbing.

1936 — Anglo-Irish trade pact ends tariff war.

1944 — U.S. forces attack Japanese at Eniwetok Atoll in Pacific in World War II.

1965 — U.S. spacecraft Ranger 8 is launched from Cape Kennedy, Florida, and makes crash-landing on moon three days later after sending back more than 7,000 pictures.

1988 — Gunmen kidnap U.S. Marine officer serving with United Nations peacekeeping force in South Lebanon.

1989 — Muslims demonstrate asking death for Salman Rushdie, author of novel "The Satanic Verses" which they consider blasphemous to Islam.

1990 — East Germany announces it will tear down a 600-foot section of the Berlin Wall near the Brandenburg Gate, which will be the first section with no official controls.

By The Associated Press

Weekend Crossword

LURE JOB
By Arthur S. Verdesca

- ACROSS
- Ship's prison
 - US merchant
 - Before: pref.
 - Umpire's call
 - I could — horse!
 - Home of ancient Greeks
 - Parish
 - Was obligated
 - Yell: shout
 - Covering with foam
 - Coffin: casket
 - Invited
 - Walk in a lively manner
 - Den
 - Most chivalrous
 - The best
 - Female suffix
 - Comforts
 - "Ade" for one
 - 16: dual
 - 17: moved cautiously
 - 21: Saltport item
- DOWN
- Harry's spouse
 - Transported with emotion
 - "Take — leave it"
 - Memory-making
 - Confessions
 - Of the — (defensive)
 - Organic compound
 - Knight
 - Julia
 - Most chivalrous
 - The best
 - Female suffix
 - Comforts
 - "Ade" for one
 - 16: dual
 - 17: moved cautiously
 - 21: Saltport item

24 Invited

- 25 Merciless

26 Sarin — Jewett

27 Quiver

28 Like the Gobi

29 Benevolent

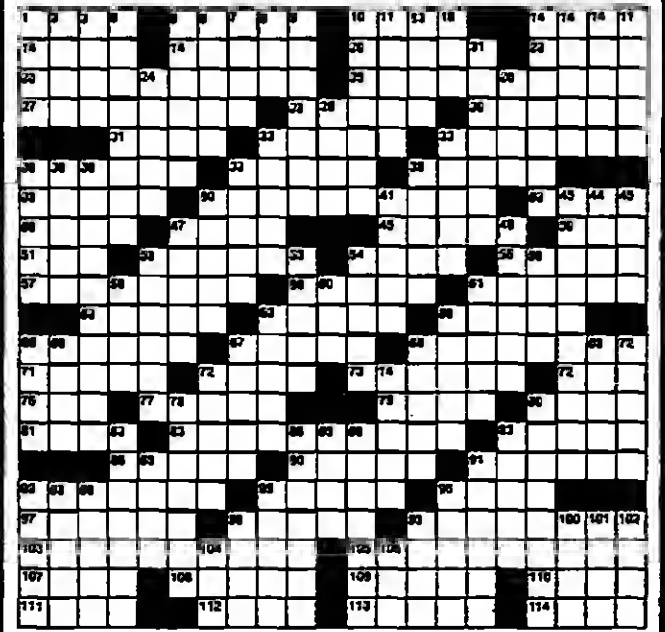
30 Have being

31 Convent: holding

32 Possessive

33 Shines

37 Refuse to give in

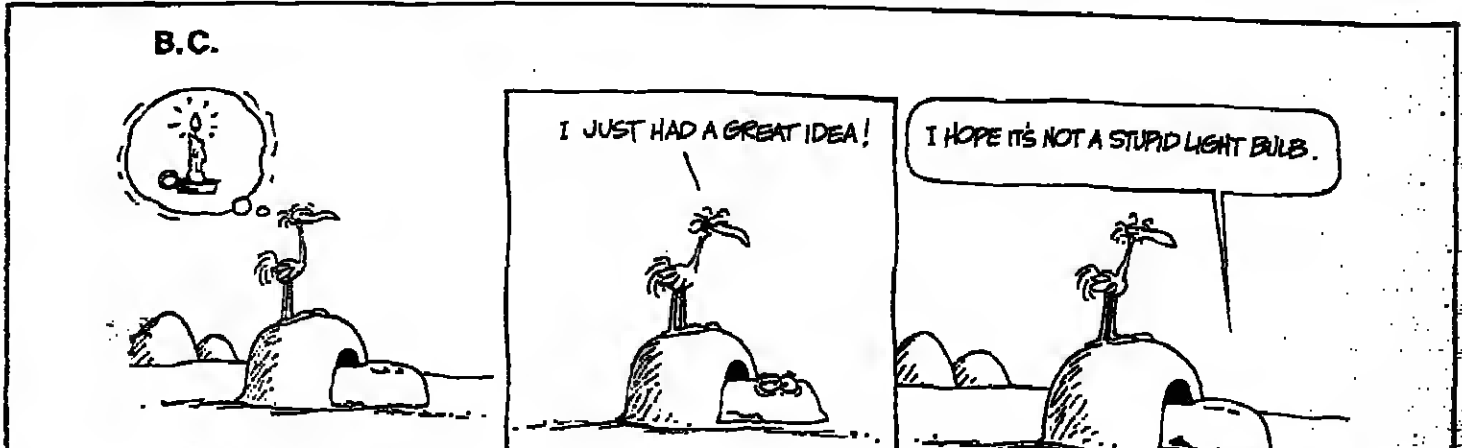
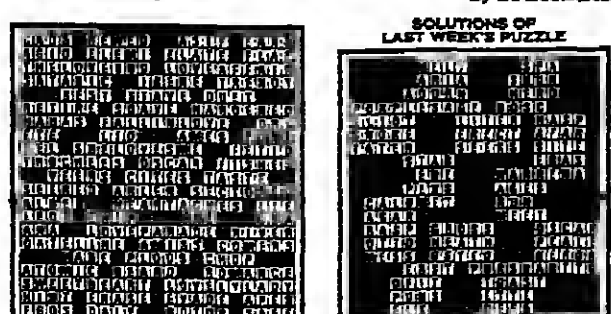


Last Week's Cryptograms

- Monkey eyes monk sitting on stool eating banana, rudely grabs it and runs.
- Look before you leap. Phrasing heading into things is risky and also best for business.
- Cosmo's secretary presents an improved economic recovery scheme to his president.
- Many rock groups' names made no sense, like purged lyrics.

CRYPTOGRAMS

- TAA TYNISERTON TNL PTIF RILLB
UGLLYL YTEMFUGLY MOIQER NGLQI
USAM YNQEN SE NGL PSSE. — By Lois H. Jones
- IZCBRUZB OGDZL OP CIZMPUCOZ OSZ
BMORCOMPL ICA FLTA ICZD NO SCUYZU
OP BLYZBOCLT. — By Barbara J. Rags
- IOTWCVR TSZQBWAUMA XTR ITCA
GATOQZ POLY FEVY YBQGLRQ SAMLXBWF
ILWFAO. — By Gordon Miller
- IPXIMC CECSEIMC UX EHL CRUSH
MUSCLEUP. — By Ed Haddleson



Elvis 'king of the cats' Presley goes on sale in China

By Janet Snyder
Reuters

PEKING — Practically the only place on Earth Elvis Presley has not been "sighted" is in China.

It is also virtually the only place where the king of rock 'n' roll's records have never been officially released.

That changed on Jan. 22 when Elvis records appeared in shops in Peking and Shanghai for the first time.

The Western promoters of the record release said their aim in bringing Elvis to the Chinese was to have an impact on the future face of music in the world's most populous country.

Elvis is not entirely an unknown in the capital of Communist China. The U.S. sin-

ger, known to his Chinese fans as "king of the cats," has won a cult following despite decades of ideological bans, record burnings and anti-Western purges.

"Everybody knows (the song) Love Me Tender," one young aficionado said.

"Elvis is amazing," he enthused over the debut China release of Elvis's Golden Hits, the 1958 classic featuring Jailhouse Rock, All Shook Up and Heartbreak Hotel.

In the 1950s and 60s, when Elvis was at his peak, China was in the throes of anti-Western campaigns. During the xenophobia of the 1966-76 Cultural Revolution, Elvis fans who had managed to obtain his records saw them rooted out and set ablaze by rampaging Red Guards.

"China is one of the few places in the world Elvis hasn't been released," said Anders Nilsson, managing director of BMG Pacific Ltd, the Hong Kong company that released the Elvis records in China.

Since Elvis died in 1977 a steady stream of fans from all over the world have made the pilgrimage to his palatial Memphis mansion, Graceland. Some refuse to believe he is really dead.

Hundreds of Elvis "sightings" have been reported around the world and now that Elvis is big in China local wits predict that it is only a matter of time before someone claims to have seen him "alive and well" in Manchuria.

Nilsson persuaded Elvis's

widow, Priscilla, and his estate executors to give their blessing to the China release.

"She was very enthusiastic that I was working on getting Elvis into China," Nilsson said. "I was impressed that she wanted the 'legend' presented in the right light rather than just for bucks."

Nilsson said he chose the Golden Hits album as the debut offering because the young, handsome Elvis was then at his best.

Selling Elvis has been easy because he is already widely known, he said.

The first run of 20,000 tapes sold out in six days, and a second scheduled run of 30,000 is already pre-sold, said Kenny Bloom, president of BMG's China license KB Communications.

"You've got to sell 40,000 to 50,000 to make it worthwhile," he said. "We've already broken even. The rest is gravy."

The Elvis tape, manufactured in China, sells for nine yuan (\$1.73). Elvis collectors from all over the world have telephoned BMG clamouring for tapes with the Chinese packaging, Nilsson said.

Other BMG artists whose tapes are appearing in China include Lionel Richie and Whitney Houston.

One big reason for distributing Elvis in China was a sense of mission, Nilsson said.

Reared in Hong Kong after his Swedish missionary parents were expelled from China in 1949, the pony-tailed businessman said he always

wanted the Chinese to rock to Elvis's music.

"Release Elvis and other foreign artists will have a tremendous musical influence in China," Bloom said. "There were a lot of kids coming up, many of them classically trained."

"We're releasing the best of the best here. When you're only releasing a dozen (foreign) albums a year, you have to be careful what you pick."

BMG is the only foreign record company with a full-time presence in China, Nilsson said.

The company hopes to make an impact with Chinese artists.

"We're here to stay — signing up local talent, paying royalties to song writers," he said.



Elvis Presley

China's first soap opera reminds viewers of real life

By Kathy Wilhelm
The Associated Press

PEKING — A family is riven by bitterness decades old. Secret lovers find the child they gave away long ago. A woman is half-paralyzed by an accident before she can grasp her first real chance at happiness.

These are a few of the plot twists in Expectations, China's first soap opera, which has kept millions glued to television sets for weeks.

It has struck a chord in a nation where real life often has resembled a soap opera. Divided families, thwarted romances, marriages of convenience and unjust arrests were common in the political upheavals of the 1950s, '60s and '70s.

The actors in Expectations are objects of mass adulation. Young men talk dreamily of having a wife like Liu Huiyang, the gentle, self-sacrificing heroine who is struck by a car

and left unable to walk.

She and the other characters are analysed in scholarly forums, in newspapers and over dinner tables. Meetings that conflict with episodes of Expectations are poorly attended.

During the stars' visit to a Peking factory, workers crowded so closely around their car that they broke the windows. Such star fever is extremely rare in China, where the only fan clubs are for model workers and soldiers.

Producer Zheng Xiaolong said senior Chinese leader Deng Xiaoping's office recently requested a video of the series. A Shanghai newspaper said Communist Party chief Jiang Zemin and Premier Li Peng watched the show and gave it high marks.

The makers of Expectations are stupefied, and exhausted, by the enthusiasm.

"We didn't expect this at all," Li Xiaoming, the head script writer, said before

dashing off to yet another meeting about the programme.

As Li left, Zheng explained: "The Ministry of Commerce is having a meeting today. Tomorrow, the Ministry of Public Security will have one. We have these activities every day and have to give interviews besides. We shouldn't accept these invitations. I don't have enough time."

The response is an even greater surprise in the climate of public apathy evident since June 1989, when the army crushed a democracy movement that millions of ordinary Chinese had joined or cheered on.

Peking residents, in particular, have remained indifferent to government efforts to stir up interest in arts festivals, the Asian Games, public cleanup drives and almost any collective activity.

"This is a made-up story," Li said of the soap opera, "but when Chinese watch it, they think it's true. They ask, 'the

people you wrote about, who are they in real life?'"

He said many people asked if he was the model for Luo Gang, whose romance was destroyed by the tumult of the far-left Cultural Revolution in the 1960s.

"But when they see how old I am, they drop that idea," Li said, laughing. He is 34, making him 10 when the Cultural Revolution began.

Other fans wrote to say the story resembled their lives or those of people they knew.

Many wanted episodes shown every night. Television stations in most major cities showed two episodes a night several nights a week, and some already are showing it a second time.

Expectations follows the Liu and Wang families from the 1960s, when they deck their homes with posters of Chairman Mao Tse-tung, to the 1980s, when they dress smartly, study English and grapple with the new prosperity and

corruption.

The Wangs are intellectuals scattered by the Cultural Revolution — the father to a labour camp, the physician daughter to the countryside, the student son to a factory.

Wang Husheng, the son, meets Liu Huiyang, who works in his factory, and marries her to improve his class status. Li said the message was that life and love go on despite political turmoil. It is a message to which Chinese can relate in 1991 as they wait warily for their aging leaders to die and new ones to struggle to the fore.

Even in the worst days of the Cultural Revolution, Li said, "workers and peasants lived a poor life and had great mental pressure, but ... they still had fun on holidays, they still got married and gave birth."

"In the midst of great catastrophe, there always is a bit of joy. This is the human condition."

Zheng and Li said they deliberately kept their focus on the lives and loves of the characters rather than political issues, even though the Cultural Revolution is the plot's dramatic engine.

"We didn't write about Liu Huiyang having a revolution in her soul," Zheng said dryly.

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"In the midst of great catastrophe, there always is a bit of joy. This is the human condition."

Shirley Horn — doing what comes naturally

By Charles J. Gans
The Associated Press

NEW YORK — While pop music has its artificial flavours of the month, jazz singer-pianist Shirley Horn uses only all-natural ingredients.

During her 30-year career, her timeless music has made no concessions to passing fads or fancies. She has acquired near-cult status among her fellow jazz artists as a master interpreter of the American song who's equally accomplished as a vocalist and instrumentalist.

The public recognition she deserves has been slow. But in the past few years, helped by two well-received albums for the verve-polygram label, the 56-year-old "grandmother's" career has flourished.

"Pure" and "natural" are the adjectives she chooses to describe her music. In person, she is soft-spoken, elegant and dignified. She uses silence and understatement to make her points, much the same way as she plays music.

"I don't think there's a category for me," she said in a recent interview. "I like to be referred to as a good singer of good songs in good taste."

The past year has been full of triumphs.

She performed at major jazz festivals in Switzerland, Holland and Chicago. She also made her movie debut singing the standard "I Can't Get Started," backed by Wynton Marsalis' Band, in the film *Tune In Tomorrow*. Strictly as an instrumentalist, she recorded a soon-to-be released album with Carmen McRae — the first time she has ever accompanied another singer on a recording.

But the biggest thrill of all, she says, was recording her new verve album last summer with some of the musicians she calls "my favourite people."

Trumpeter Miles Davis is featured on the title track — the jazz ballad "You Won't Forget Me" — in a rare appearance as a sideman. Her ties to Davis go back to 1962 when the trumpeter brought her to New York City to open for his group at the Village Vanguard.

"Maybe 25 years ago, I said that one day I want you to record this tune with me, and I carried this song all those years because I heard him doing it," Horn said.

Marsalis' bluesy trumpet is spotlighted on the track "Don't Let The Sun Catch You Cryin'." Brother Branford Marsalis' soft tenor saxophone can be heard on a slow tempo version of the classic "It Had To Be You," and Belgian harmonica player-guitarist Toots Thielemans appears on two tracks, including a duet with Horn on the gentle ballad "Beautiful Love."

The album also features

musicians from Horn's native Washington, D.C.: Tenor saxophonist Buck Hill, and the long-time members of her trio — bassist Charles Ables and drummer Steve Williams.

"The special idea for this album was that these are songs that I identify with these people," said Horn, who arranges her own material. "It was a beautiful experience."

Marsalis described his recording session with Horn as a special experience.

"I learned a lot from her," the trumpeter said in an interview between sets at New York's Blue Note Club. "She's very relaxed when she records. Her approach to recording is very natural."

"I have a deep respect for her musicianship. ... She's always ready to play, and she has a great sense of humour. Her music is very sensual and it swings. She has a great sense of phrasing."

For Horn, the lyric comes first and then the melody because her main goal is to tell a story with each song. Nat "King" Cole, who like Horn started as a pianist before turning to singing, was an important influence. She admired him for "the ease with which he sings and tells a story and paints a picture."

As a pianist, she listened to Errol Garner, Ahmad Jamal and Oscar Peterson, among others. She also heard all the great singers — Lena Horne, Carmen McRae, Sarah Vaughan and Billie Holiday.

Horn's career in music dates back to when her music-loving mother started her in piano lessons at age 4. In her late teens, Horn entered a special music studies programme at Howard, and began playing piano several evenings a week at a Washington dinner club.

Her jazz education came at local jazz clubs, where she played during intermissions.

"I have no regrets that I didn't become a classical pianist," she said. "I love the music I play. I like to say Oscar Peterson was my Rachmaninoff and Ahmad Jamal my Debussy."

After some early successes, she put her career more or less on hold in the 1960s to marry and raise her daughter, Rainy, re-emerging on the jazz scene in 1980s.

She made her European debut at the North Sea Jazz Festival in Holland in 1981, and later recorded four albums for the Danish steep-plate label. In 1987, Polygram's Executive Producer Richard Seidel heard her at a small New York club and signed her for the label.

Her first two verve albums, "I Thought About You" and "Close Enough For Love," were well received by critics and made Billboard's tunes.

"There are so many wonderful standards that didn't get a chance," Horn said.

Mozzamanian strikes big as Britain fetes Mozart

By Matt Wolf
The Associated Press

LONDON — Britain has a new cultural fetish, and his name is Wolfgang Amadeus Mozart.

"Mozzamanian," proclaimed the headline of a two-page feature in the Independent On Sunday, chronicling the activity to honour the composer's death on Dec. 5, 1791.

The tabloid Daily Mail headlined its contribution, "Mozza, the start who invented groupies," and said the composing genius had an "offstage lifestyle which made the Rolling Stones seem like choirboys."

The term "Mozza" is a tabloid invention picking up on "Gazza" — Paul Gas-

coigne — England's soccer star in the 1990 World Cup.

This year, said the Daily Mail, symphonies, not soccer, are in. "Forget it, Gazza," wrote journalist David Roper. "Kindly leave the stage and welcome the personality who will dominate 1991 more than any other."

London has no plan similar to New York's "Mozart Bicentennial at Lincoln Centre," which aims to perform every work the composer ever wrote. But the legendary (and prolific) Austrian nonetheless looks set to dominate the year's cultural output, as theatres, galleries, and concert halls all pay homage.

Mozart will be the only composer this summer at the Tony Glyndebourne Opera House, south of London. On

May 24 conductor Simon Rattle and director Trevor Nunn open a new production of *Così Fan Tutte*. The duo previously collaborated on a landmark staging of Porgy and Bess in 1986.

Nicholas Hytner, director of the Broadway-bound musical *Miss Saigon*, will stage the infrequently performed *La Clemenza di Tito*, opening on June 28. Revivals of *Le Nozze di Figaro*, *The Magic Flute*, *Idomeneo*, and *Don Giovanni* round out the Glyndebourne season.

At the English National Opera, Mozart has helped raise attendance otherwise depressed by the company's "20-plus" line-up of exclusively 20th-century operas.

The exceptions — *Così Fan Tutte*, the *Magic Flute*, and *Don Giovanni* — can all be

counted on to attract more opera-goers than commercially risky modern selections like Arribert Reimann's *Lear* and Stravinsky's *Oedipus Rex*.

London has already this year hosted two relevant stage productions. France's Theatre De L'Unité brought Mozart Au Chocolat, a performance piece in which wigged sections of the audience sipped hot chocolate.

The Actors Touring Company is traveling Britain through April with Mozart And Salieri, a "dramatic fantasy" about the relationship between Mozart and the court composer Antonio Salieri. That same dynamic fuelled Peter Shaffer's play *Amadeus* and its subsequent Oscar-winning film version.

The Royal Academy of Arts has issued a Mozart portfolio of six original artist's prints. Of primary interest is Tom Phillips's etching *On Mozart*, which argues that the artist has been forgotten amid the tide of "statues and festivals and postcards and marzipan sweets."

Across town at the Barbican, starting on Feb. 14, is the exhibition "Mozart in art, 1900-1990." It features over 170 works by 50 artists from Paul Klee and Raul Dufy to Robert Indiana and David Hockney.

Lest this attention be seen to feed a distorted myth, the British have been examining that, too.

Mid-January saw the Channel 4 show *J'Accuse: Wolfgang Amadeus Mozart*, in which various widely held

beliefs about the composer's life were put on trial. Among the conclusions — no, he was not poisoned, nor was he poor.

A lengthy profile in the daily Independent newspaper concluded that Mozart to some extent resists our best investigations: "Mozart will remain a mysterious figure not because he saw a lot of doctors, not because he used four-letter words, ... (but) for something else besides: An elusive thrilling beauty for which no word exists but Mozartean."

And for those bored by music, there's always billiards. "Mozart was the best billiards player in Europe," claimed a brochure for a recent weekend of billiards at the Barbican.

But the biggest thrill of all, she says, was recording her new verve album last summer with some of the musicians she calls "my favourite people."

Trumpeter Miles Davis is featured on the title track — the jazz ballad "You Won't Forget Me" — in a rare appearance as a sideman. Her ties to Davis go back to 1962 when the trumpeter brought her to New York City to open for his group at the Village Vanguard.

"Maybe 25 years ago, I said that one day I want you to record this tune with me, and I carried this song all those years because I heard him doing it," Horn said.

Marsalis' bluesy trumpet is spotlighted on the track "Don't Let The Sun Catch You Cryin'." Brother Branford Marsalis' soft tenor saxophone can be heard on a slow tempo version of the classic "It Had To Be You," and Belgian harmonica player-guitarist Toots Thielemans appears on two tracks, including a duet with Horn on the gentle ballad "Beautiful Love."

The album also features

the gasps, sobs and throat-catches that go with it.

The audience responded with the cheers and applause it had been waiting to give. There were other moments of the Pavarotti thrill, such as his soaring phrase to Luisa at act I's end: "It is I, your husband."

The opera's truly great scenes are in the last act, and there Pavarotti was powerful in his poisoning-recrimination-reconciliation scene with Luisa.

The tenor didn't really seem that involved with the drama until his "classic" aria, "Quando Le Sere Al Placido" in the second act. Here he delivered the goods — a passionate intensity — and all

one but God when Walter is about to arrest him.

Plishka's performance was wonderfully world-weary. Walter is a man who killed a cousin for his position and probably survived a bit of adversity himself. Plishka communicated those years of intrigue through the quality of his voice.

Pavarotti, his girth always well-draped, was the dramatic equivalent of the haystack in Miller's house, particularly in the first act and a half.

Conductor Nello Santi directed the act in one arc, moving things along where they had to go and lingering when that was called for. Musically, he was a strong force.

Pavarotti in Met Opera revival of Verdi's Luisa Miller

By Daniel J. Watkins
The Associated Press

NEW YORK — Giuseppe Verdi's lesser-known Luisa Miller has returned to the Metropolitan Opera with a very well-known tenor.

At opening night, Luciano Pavarotti as Rodolfo was ever more himself — hand-wringing, gasping with emotion, powerful and immobile. Soprano Kallen Esperian, in the title role in place of Susan Dunn, was committed and convincing in conception but vocally a little pushed.

It was, however, the opera's pair of honour-obsessed fathers, sung by Leo Nucci and Paul Plishka, who stood out.

That's not easy to do with

the cavernous sets and gray-black-brown colour scheme of this austere 1968 production. The central room in Count Walter's castle is immense and neo-gothic—the house of the old soldier, Miller, is barn-like and beamed.

A certain impersonality of staging clashes with the opera's more intimate nature and themes, which point toward *La Traviata*, *Rigoletto* and *Il Trovatore*.

Luisa, based on Friedrich Schiller's late 18th century play *Intrigue and Love*, is the last work but one before those three operas and serves as a transition between Verdi's early and middle periods. Its concerns are a father's love for his daughter, the clash of social stations and

love across class lines.

The plot involves two sets of parent and child: Miller and daughter Luisa, and Count Walter and son Rodolfo. The fly in the ointment is Wurm (one of opera's best villainous names), Walter's chief henchman.

Rodolfo and Luisa love each other. Wurm also loves Luisa, but Miller won't hear of such a match. Walter wants his son to marry the Dutchess of Osthelm for her money and station, but Rodolfo won't hear of that.

The count imprisons Miller, and Wurm forces Luisa to write a letter declaring her love for Wurm. The letter is quickly leaked to Rodolfo, and driven to distraction, he poisons Luisa and himself.

Their death throes allow her enough time to reveal the letter was false, and Rodolfo enough time to skewer Wurm.

Some of the opera's most effective scenes are between the parents and children, just as so many similar scenes by Verdi. Rigoletto comes immediately to mind. Could it have had anything?

Nucci brought out the complexity of Miller's character. His tenderness and devotion to Luisa came through in the opera's very first scene, when he tells Wurm that Luisa's choice of a husband cannot be forced in musical phrases which moved lyrically forward.

He brought a noble tone in telling Luisa never to prostrate herself before any

one but God when Walter is about to arrest him.

Plishka's performance was wonderfully world-weary. Walter is a man who killed a cousin for his position and probably survived a bit of adversity himself. Plishka communicated those years of intrigue through the quality of his voice.

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Top researcher says AIDS vaccine 5 years away

PARIS (AP) — France's leading AIDS researcher has said that he does not foresee a vaccine against the deadly disease for at least five more years.

"I think the main way to prevent AIDS is through education," Prof. Luc Montagnier told a luncheon of English and American journalists in Paris.

"We have made some progress, but we have no definitive answer yet," he said of prospects for a vaccine.

Montagnier said he was pursuing unpopular research to link the AIDS virus with bacteria-like organisms known as Mycoplasmas.

"Up to now, Mycoplasmas were not taken very seriously because they were not the cause of serious disease," Montagnier told the Anglo-American Press Association.

He said he believes Mycoplasmas could be an activating agent for the "sleeping" virus along with other substances he did not specify.

Montagnier, who heads the Pasteur Institute's team credited with the co-discovery of the HIV virus, has been studying the possible role of Mycoplasmas for the past year and a half.

Work published in the December issue of the French Academy of Sciences Journal

suggests that Mycoplasmas may work with the virus to produce the symptoms of Acquired Immune Deficiency Syndrome (AIDS).

Mycoplasmas are common, known organisms which, in contrast to the AIDS virus, can be treated with antibiotics.

The international community has remained skeptical about a possible connection between the virus and Mycoplasmas.

"If you find something new, you have not only to find it but to sell it," Montagnier said. "I am in the same way now with my Mycoplasma as in 1983."

He was referring to his claim of discovery of the AIDS virus, Montagnier and U.S. scientist Robert C. Gallo of the National Cancer Institute share credit for discovering the virus, but the French have long claimed they discovered it first, publishing information on it in 1983, one year before the American team.

Following a lengthy court battle, the U.S. and French teams now share royalties on an AIDS test, but Montagnier said the Pasteur Institute has not yet directly profited from the arrangement. So far, the money has been used to pay legal bills, he said.

Childhood leukemia linked to certain power lines and appliances

LOS ANGELES (AP) — Children may face twice the risk of getting leukemia if they live near power lines, frequently use hair dryers or watch black-and-white television, says a study sponsored by Electric Utilities.

The findings offer "considerable support for a relationship between children's electrical appliance use and leukemia risk," said a summary of the study by the University of Southern California.

Yet, in a seemingly contradictory finding, the unpublished, preliminary study found no link between the children's risk of getting leukemia and the actual electrical fields measured in their bedrooms.

The researchers found slight increases in leukemia risk were associated with exposure to magnetic fields in the bedroom and to children's use of curling irons and electric blankets. But those correlations weren't statistically significant.

The University of Southern California (USC) study of 464 Los Angeles County children age 10 and younger was considered important because it was financed by the Electric Power Research Institute, which has been skeptical of earlier studies linking cancer to electromagnetic fields.

The institute, however, said no single study can settle the controversy over electrical and magnetic fields, which are emitted by every wire and device that carries current.

Dr. John Peters, director of USC's Occupational Health Division, outlined his team's preliminary findings during a closed-door scientific meeting in Carmel.

But, in an unusual step, the institute released summaries of Peter's findings.

Half the children in Peter's study developed leukemia between 1980 and 1987. They were compared with a similar group of children without leukemia. Their parents were

interviewed and scientists measured household electromagnetic fields.

The study found children who lived closest to neighborhood power lines were up to 2.5 times more likely to suffer leukemia, consistent with earlier studies conducted in Colorado.

However, the risk was still low. The rate of leukemia was 2.5 cases per 20,000 children among those living near power lines, compared with the natural rate of one leukemia case per 20,000 children.

Frequent use of hair dryers and black-and-white televisions also increased leukemia risk, but the study didn't say by how much.

A source quoted by the San Francisco Chronicle said the risk was about doubled. Black-and-white TVs may tend to be older than colour TVs and thus leak stronger magnetic fields, he said.

However, the results may be flawed because parents of children with leukemia might be more likely to remember previous exposure to appliances they suspect may have contributed to the disease, the institute said.

The USC summary said the links between leukemia and power lines and appliances is only a correlation, not proof that leukemia is caused by such sources.

Several studies in recent years found links between proximity to larger, high-current electric lines and to slightly increased risks of leukemia and brain cancer in children and electrical workers.

In December, a draft report by the Environmental Protection Agency said the evidence was adequate to justify more research.

Bulgarian hospitals battle lack of funds, medicine

By Roland Prinz
The Associated Press

SOFIA — Decades of Communist rule and the breakup of the Soviet trade bloc have left this nation with a health care system that, like its economy, is gravely ill.

Hospitals lack money, equipment and even basics as cotton swabs or aspirin.

Health Minister Ivan Chernozemski has called the situation "catastrophic." An official overseeing foreign aid warns that unless help arrives this month, some patients will die as a result of the problems.

To add to its woes, Bulgaria has been forced by contract to export badly needed medicines to the Soviet Union. Meanwhile, it has received some barely useful foreign medical aid, including American equipment dating from the Korean War.

At Bulgaria's largest emergency medical centre, Pirogov, 600 doctors work under dismal conditions. Patients who can't fit into crowded wards are kept in under-heated corridors. Cotton swabs are not to be found.

The 2,500-staff hospital is a prominent victim of decades of mismanagement and now-empty government coffers.

"This hospital has no budget this year... We work as if we were on the barricades," Dr. Emil Takov, deputy head of the complex, said in a recent interview. "We live from one day to the other."

Parliament has yet to pass a 1991 budget, so there is no budget for the Health Ministry, or for Bulgaria's sick. The situation in other hospitals is no better, said

Takov. All lack medication and up-to-date equipment, and none can afford to buy them in the West.

Bulgaria, like its Eastern European neighbours, has been undergoing social and political reform in the past year. The Communist Party that ruled postwar Bulgaria has been renamed the Socialist Party and now is part of a coalition government led by an independent premier.

The current health care and economic crises partly stem from the disintegration of Comecon, the Soviet-led trading bloc in which the East Bloc received cheap Soviet energy and raw material in exchange for products.

Bulgaria is now gripped by its worst-ever economic crisis. Energy, food and other basic items are rationed, in short supply or unavailable.

Food prices rose five to seven fold on Feb. 1.

Chernozemski, the health minister, said in the interview that Bulgarians must now pay in hard currency for Soviet medicine. The situation in Bulgarian hospitals was "like in a war," he said.

"If we don't receive aid in the next 15-20 days, people who need treatment will begin to die," Petko Simeonov, director of the Agency for Foreign Aid, told reporters recently.

"Bulgaria can only hope for (foreign) aid, because about \$120 million is needed to buy necessary medicines and another \$30 million is required for raw materials for the pharmaceutical enterprises," Simeonov said.

Ironically, under an agreement Bulgaria cannot afford to break, it has to export to the Soviet Union medicines

worth over \$300 million to obtain crude oil. But Soviet oil deliveries have stagnated during the last two months.

Milka Yumova, a director of Medipharma, a state company overseeing medical imports, said hospitals lacked insulin and had only Bulgarian-made antibiotics, which are below Western standards.

"We don't have any contracts for (foreign) medicines so far this year," she said, adding that President Zhelyu Zhelev appealed for help when he visited the United States in November, but had received no response.

Another problem is that many young doctors are among the estimated 80,000 mostly educated people who have emigrated in the past year.

Some small amounts of partly private aid has come from Greece, Switzerland

and Germany. But other relief supplies amount to sheer insult, said Takov.

"From the United States, we received medical equipment from army stocks dating back to the Vietnam and even the Korean War," he said.

Much of the American equipment — including stretchers, sheets, plastic sheets and bed pans — was outdated and some of it was unusable, Takov said. "The scalpels were rusty. They could not be used at all."

Although he said his hospital received valuable aid from France, he said Germany, Holland, France and Israel have shipped poorly packed or outdated medicines or half-empty pillboxes.

"We wonder if this is the real meaning of humanitarian aid, and if it is, we don't need it," Takov said.

Researchers identify protein in Alzheimer's disease

By Paul Reier
The Associated Press

WASHINGTON — A protein molecule that plays a role in the development of Alzheimer's disease has been identified as an abnormal form of a natural protein in the brain, and researchers say they now can concentrate on finding the cause of the transformation.

Researchers at the University of Pennsylvania report in the journal Science that the protein, called A-68, is identical in most respects to a normal protein of the brain that is called Tau.

Virginia M.-Y. Lee, the lead author of the study, said that the finding will enable researchers to now look for the mechanism that somehow causes Tau to be transformed into A-68 and perhaps cause neurofibrillary tangles to

form in the brain. "Now we can focus on what causes this abnormal transformation," she said. Once this cause is found, said Lee, "perhaps we can develop blockers," or drugs, that would keep the tangles from forming.

A primary sign of Alzheimer's disease is the formation of what are called plaques and neurofibrillary tangles in the brain. These structures

lead to the death of neurons. When these neurons die it creates the loss of memory and mental function that is characteristic of Alzheimer's disease.

Lee said that although A-68 and Tau appear to be identical, Tau is a soluble protein while A-68 is not. She said this may be because the chemistry of one amino acid in the Tau molecules have been changed. Just how this

occurs, she said, is not now understood.

Donald Price, an Alzheimer's researcher at Johns Hopkins University in Baltimore, said the work confirms the suggestions of earlier researchers.

"This provides additional evidence that A-68 is Tan and not something else," he said. "It represents a step forward because it enable us to focus on what

causes Tan to become A-68."

Alzheimer's disease, named for a German psychiatrist who first described it in 1907, is the fourth leading cause of death in America. It strikes about one per cent of all adults and there are an estimated one million Americans over the age of 65 with a severe form of the disease, and another two million who are moderately affected.

Canada's health system - it's expensive, but works

By Jeffrey Ulbrich
The Associated Press

NIAGARA FALLS, Ontario — Advocates of a National Health Insurance in the United States often point to the country's northern neighbour and its health care programme. But Canada's Medicare is not without its problems.

Canada's \$50 billion Medicare programme often is held up as a model by advocates of a national health care programme in the United States. It provides free medical care to all and allows no one, regardless of income or status, to fall through the cracks.

But the programme is expensive, accounting for a per cent of the country's gross national product and as much as one-third of provincial budgets. Many say the system is in dire need of reform, especially as Canada battles a recession.

Critics cite a myriad of problems, ranging from lines in emergency rooms to a rigid fee structure. But consumers and practitioners generally agree it works.

James Battis is certain that he would have been ruined financially if Medicare, Canada's national health system, had not paid for the treatment of his baby daughter's rare ailment.

Battis' 3-year-old daughter, Zoe, was born allergic to protein. She developed a severe case of infantile colitis, was passing blood through the rectum and was "near dead," he said.

"She had many sophisticated tests that cost thousands and thousands of dollars. She was hospitalised three times, the longest for six weeks," recalled Battis, superintendent of the Niagara Falls Immigration Centre. "They brought in a doctor from the University of Pennsylvania for consultation. All this was basically at no expense at all."

"There is no question in my mind I would have lost my house and would have been paying for this rest of my life," said Battis, 39. "And no doubt, without the quality of care, she would have died."

The concept behind Canadian Medicare is that medical care is a basic right that should be available to all regardless of economic circumstances, and that money should not be a factor in

deciding whether to see a doctor.

"It's a system not of socialised medicine, but of socialised insurance," said Robert Evans, a professor of economics at the University of British Columbia and an authority on health costs.

In fact, there is not one Canadian health system, there are 12 run by the provincial and territorial governments. Ottawa contributes substantial funding under the Canada

Health Act. In exchange, the 10 provinces and two territories must meet certain federal-level set standards.

Each provincial government conducts negotiations with medical and hospital associations to determine fee structure.

The system's selling point is simplicity, said Dr. Bruce Davis, director-general of health insurance at the Federal Ministry of Health and Welfare. Doctors and hospitals bill one source — the

government — and receive monthly checks. They don't deal with bad debts or multiple insurance companies and levels of government.

The system has controls not only over fees but over competition between hospitals. "The province may say you don't need a cat scanner in your hospital just because the hospital down the street has it," Davis said.

But the system is not perfect. "I think the system when it

first began worked quite well," said Dr. Peter Newman, a Toronto general practitioner. "I think it is now groaning under the strain."

Dr. Lionel Lvoje, who practices in Melfort, Saskatchewan, and is president of the Canadian Medical Association, put it this way:

"It's like driving an old car. You can keep it going for a while, but eventually it's going to break down."

Mike Brown, a 37-year-old journalist now on permanent

disability, saw his triple bypass surgery delayed several times. Nonetheless, he feels he got the best possible care.

"If they thought I was going to die, I would have had the surgery faster," he said.

Cardiac care is one of the critical areas in the Canadian system. Patients frequently have to wait long periods for surgery. The main problem, health professionals say, is a severe shortage of critical care nurses.

In his best-selling book "Second Opinion: What's Wrong With Canada's Health Care System And How to Fix It," Dr. Michael Rachlis said physicians "overhospitalised people all the time, performing unnecessary diagnostic tests and surgeries" in an attempt to maximise income. "Once we get people into the hospital, we like to keep them there far longer than the evidence suggests is medically required or even advisable," he said.

Dr. David Peachey, director of professional affairs for the Ontario Medical Association, said 15 per cent of all people in the hospital do not need to be there. But he says this is due in part to a shortage of chronic care facilities. As a result, there are waiting lists for hospital beds and long lines in emergency room corridors.

"Americans ration by price," he said. "We ration by waiting list."

The American Medical Association is a major critic of proposals for National Health Insurance in the United States. It says that per capita, the United States has eight times as many magnetic resonance imaging, or MRI, units and three times as many cardiac catheterisation and open-heart surgery units as Canada.

The AMA said waits in Vancouver range from six to nine months for a cataract extraction to one to three months for a psychiatric, neurosurgical or routine orthopedic opinion. In Quebec, patients can wait six months for an angiogram and eight to nine months for coronary artery bypass surgery.

Supporters of the Canadian system say the disparity reflects an excess capacity in the United States that results in unnecessary procedures, tests and operations.

Depressed by long winters and gray skies? In light there's hope

By Jeffrey Ulbrich
The Associated Press

TORONTO — Canada: Long, cold, gray, depressing winters in the frozen north. That's often the image of this immense land, and many Canadians might concur. Psychiatrists certainly agree with the depressing part.

Hundreds of thousands of Canada's 26.5 million people suffer from what is called seasonal affective disorder, or SAD.

It accompanies the onset of winter, causing severe depression, loss of energy, poor concentration, sleepiness and weight gain. Unless SAD is treated, only spring will cure it.

The malady also is found in the northern United States and other countries with cold climates and short periods of winter daylight. The frequency of SAD is greater the farther north one goes.

"We don't know the specific cause," said Dr. Anthony Levitt of Toronto's Clarke Psychiatric Institute, who is doing research with a new visor device that attaches to the head and shines light into a patient's eyes.

"We know SAD has to do with a geographic, climatic variable that acts on a vulnerability," he said, "but what triggers it and why one person gets it and the next doesn't, we don't know. There may be a genetic component."

Dr. Raymond Lam of the University of British Columbia said one of the strongest theories is an abnormality in the circadian rhythm, the biological clock that controls things like sleep and hormones. One synchroniser of the clock is the light-dark cycle.

"We think these people aren't able to set the clock to the changing day length of winter," he said.

Light treatment is designed to help reset the clock. Because the light enters through the eyes, Lam wondered if SAD involved a problem in the retina, the part of the eye that receives light.

His studies found "small but significant" differences in the retinas of people who get sad and those who don't, but said it was too soon to draw conclusions.

Depression in general is a significant health problem because it occurs so frequently and is so debilitating.

"People with chronic depression have more disability than people with heart disease, lung disease and arthritis," said Levitt, a psychiatrist born in Australia.

The Clarke Institute's mood disorders programme is coordinating research into light treatment in five North America cities — Toronto; Vancouver, British Columbia; Boston; Washington, and Salt Lake City — chosen to give the research a geographic spread. About 120 patients are involved.

Scientists are trying to determine the proper dose of light treatment with the visor device, which resembles a miner's lamp with the light shining backward into the eyes.

Its maker has a special interest. "I'm a SAD sufferer myself," said Neal Owens, president of the Sunbox Co. of Rockville, Maryland.

"I found myself not able to get up on time," he said. "I was feeling tired even if I got a good night's sleep. I gained weight. I was unable to concentrate. I just had the feeling of not wanting to be bothered even doing fun things. It was like being weighted down, like being in slow motion."

Fear of losing his job prompted Owens to seek help at the National Institute for Mental Health. He was identified as a SAD sufferer and given light treatment.

"Within a matter of a few days I was able to get up on time and get to the job," he said. "I didn't believe it was the lights, so I stopped using them, and in a week I was back where I was before. I really just couldn't believe how something simple like lights could help someone."

Working with the institute, Owens began making light boxes; into which the patient stares.

The trouble with the boxes, Levitt said, is that a person

moves his head, which changes the intensity of light that enters the eyes. The biobrite visor, which Owens invented, attaches to the head, keeping the light source a constant two inches (about 5 centimetres) from the eye.

"It's very simple," Levitt said. "That's what's so appealing. Only about 15 per cent get some kind of side effects like headaches, eyestrain or irritability. ... Most people get better in the first week, and it's reasonably inexpensive."

He said about 80 per cent of patients respond to treatment, which "is a remarkable rate, but there is no guarantee they will be better next year or that they will stay better."

In a 1990 study, the treatment group was given about 5,000 LUX, a measure of illumination, and the control group received a much lower intensity of light.

Researchers were surprised to find the group given the dimmer light had better results, which did not fit current theories. Lam said they may not have been using the proper light measurement.

"Maybe that dim light, because it is so close to the eye, is giving the same amount of energy transfer" as brighter light farther away, he said. "Maybe we are measuring light incorrectly."

The visor study ends in March and results are expected by summer.

Israel prepares to transfer Palestinians

By Saeed Kilani
Special to the Jordan Times

WHILE all media attention is directed towards the war in the Gulf, the Israeli government is taking the chance to implement its policy of transfer, according to analysts and observers. Under the cover of war, Israel has succeeded, as reports from several organisations and officials reveal, to close its doors in front of all Palestinians, while imprisoning thousands in the occupied territories. In addition to the curfew that has been imposed on the West Bank and Gaza Strip since the beginning of the war, the Israelis require all those who have to leave to sign a pledge not to return before three years.

AT 5.30 a.m. every morning, tens of Palestinians crowd at the Abadi bus terminal in Amman waiting to be transported to River Jordan crossing points and then into the occupied West Bank. Arriving at King Hussein bridge or Prince Mohammad bridge, most are told by the Israelis: "Try again tomorrow."

Since the Gulf war erupted on Jan. 17, the Israeli occupation authorities allow no more than 80 people to cross daily into the West Bank. On many occasions, the Israelis did not allow in more than two or three people. Even when they allowed Palestinians to enter, most were above 60 years of age, said one Palestinian, whose 55-year-old aunt was barred from entering for over 10 days for no particular reason.

While the Israelis are only allowing a few people to trickle in, they are opening the doors wide for Palestinians leaving the

mal flow of passengers in other years, where around 300-400 persons depart daily in winter, this is an indication of a deliberate policy of transfer backed by some ministers in the Israeli government," added Qatanani, referring to the recent inclusion of Rehavam Zeevi, the leader of the extremist Moledet (Homeland) Party, in Yitzhak Shamir's right-wing government.

Contradictions in policies

Observers say that the inclusion of Zeevi, who demands the total evacuation of Palestinians from their homeland, in the Israeli government, is seen as a warning to neighbouring Arab countries, especially Jordan, where Muslim leaders advocate the total liberation of Palestine.

The Israeli government has thus put into effect all the necessary measures to ensure that a large number of Palestinians are not allowed to return back while "helping" others to leave. In this respect, many Palestinians who intend to leave the occupied territories for a short period of time, for medical or personal reasons for example, are forced not to return before nine months and others not before three years.

Jordan, which severed legal ties with the West Bank in 1988, allows Palestinians only a month's stay in the Kingdom.

"What can I do if I can only stay for one month in Jordan while the Israelis will not allow me in before nine months?" complained one West Banker who preferred anonymity.

More complicated still is the case of Gaza Strip Palestinians who carry Egyptian travel documents and who are not allowed to enter Egypt nor according to Jordanian laws, are they authorised to stay in Jordan for more than 48 hours, adding still to the problem of all Palestinian evacuees arriving from Kuwait and Iraq. However, due to present circumstances, the Jordanian government in cooperation with the PLO office in Amman made arrangements by which Palestinians could temporarily stay in the country.

Jordan's position

After lobbying from Jordanian deputies, the Ministry of Interior decided to issue Gazans with temporary passports that would help them sort out their problems, according to Abdullah Zuhair, head of the cultural department at the PLO office in Amman. "As for students, our office shouldered the responsibility of paying around a quarter-of-a-million Jordanian dinars monthly to Palestinian students in Kuwait."

The government, however, insists that these measures be temporary and only intended to

help Palestinians at these difficult times. "We fully understand the dimensions of the problem and the major restraints imposed by the Israeli authorities," Qatanani said. "At the time being, Jordan is dealing with this problem in a humane way until Palestinians have a chance to cross the border."

Most of Palestinians now waiting to cross into the West Bank come mainly from Iraq, Jordan, with its limited resources, can barely cater to their needs and the needs of other evacuees. Jordan has asked the U.N. and other organisations to intervene. So far, the Israelis have not responded, according to Jordanian sources. Israel says these measures are part of "heightened security measure" to ensure security in the occupied territories. This is primarily manifested in the prolonged curfew imposed by the Israelis on the nearly two million Palestinians.

Occupied territories

The prolonged curfew imposed on the Palestinians since the beginning of the Gulf war has in effect increased the hardships of the Palestinian people under occupation, a report issued by the Palestine Human Rights Information Centre (PHRIC) in Washington said. The curfew "has become a form of collective punishment; it has

dramatically increased tension in the area and caused major losses to the Palestinians," the report said.

The report quotes Shlomo Gazit, former head of Israeli military intelligence, as telling the Jerusalem Post on Jan. 8: "With a real war in its hands, Israel must be expected to lift all moral and legal restraints. The IDF (Israeli army) would have to keep all roads open for military movements, and any Arab attempt to interfere with this would be suppressed with brute force. This could very likely result in a new mass exodus of Palestinians to the east."

PHRIC also reported 1,000 Palestinians have been arrested in the West Bank and Gaza Strip for breaking the curfew. Hospitals and clinics reported a rise in stress-related cases, primarily premature labour, chest pains and respiratory distress, in addition to the devastating effects on an already crippled economy in the occupied territories.

Economists estimate losses of about \$5 million during the first 10 days of the curfew. During the past three months, PHRIC points out, at least 10,000 Palestinian men between the ages of 20-35 have been issued special cards that deny them employment in Israel. Thousands of others have lost their jobs to newly arrived Rus-



sian Jewish immigrants.

Despite all Israeli measures, Palestinians in Jordan insist that they still want to go home under all circumstances.

"It is my homeland... do you

think I can give up everything so easily? I have to go back, and they must let me in," said a 60-year-old woman who kept going to the bridges every day for a week but with no success.

30 killed

(Continued from page 1)

affidavit from the injured driver of the bus.

Reuters reported the death of another 30 Sudanese civilians in a separate attack Monday on a bus on the road between Baghdad and Amman, quoting a Sudanese refugee who "quoted officials and other Sudanese as telling him."

The reports on the first incident, which quoted survivors of the attack crossing Al Ruweished border Wednesday, said that the bus was attacked Saturday near the village of Mehla, near the Iraq-Kuwait border.

"We have seen the driver. He said that the bus was attacked by allied bombers and he gave us a rundown of the incident. Now we will have to wait for the rest of the service before we make any official announcement," the senior official said.

He explained that the initial report by the driver of the bus detailed how the bus "was hit in the back which started the fire in the bus, some of those riding the bus ran out but others stayed in the bus which was attacked again."

"The driver said that those who stayed in the bus died in the fire," the official said.

The Associated Press and Reuters quoted Shehadeh Ibrahim Shehadeh, 50, as saying that "the bus caught fire when the planes bombed it. I saw four children and other people burned inside." Mr. Shehadeh told the agencies that the wounded were taken to a hospital in Kuwait.

Mr. Shehadeh himself, according to the reports, said he suffered slight burn injuries and was treated at an Iraqi hospital.

"It was terrible, terrible. All those poor people in the bus

and the little children killed. Why?" said another elderly survivor named Yousef.

The official said that the bus driver had indicated that the allied planes had targeted civilians who were trying to escape the bus attack scene.

"We will not be able to elaborate until we formulate the correct picture of what took place," the official said.

Six other refugees who left Kuwait Saturday and Sunday confirmed the incident. They told Reuters that they had seen the charred bodies still sitting in the bus as they passed it.

Sudanese Ahmad Ali, who reported the second bus attack, said he had seen a burned-out bus on the Baghdad-Amman highway between Ramadi and Al Rutbah after he left the Iraqi capital Tuesday.

He said officials and other Sudanese told him two "loads of Sudanese on their way to Jordan had come under allied attack around 11.30 p.m. Monday. He said he was told 30 people were killed and 10 injured in the burned-out bus. Jordanian Red Crescent officials said they had sent ambulances and medical teams to areas in Iraq to look for Jordanian dead and wounded.

Invasion

(Continued from page 1)

"You must insist (on not giving concessions). This is the opinion of our friends in Egypt, Washington and London," the Emir wrote.

The Iraqi president, Mr. Saddam Hussein, has said on many occasions that the Kuwaitis had conspired with the U.S. to weaken Iraq after the end of Iran-Iraq war.

In a letter addressed to the Arab League July 15, Iraqi Foreign Minister Tariq Aziz accused Kuwait and the United Arab Emirates of deliberately

increasing oil production beyond OPEC quotas in order to bring oil prices down and deprive Iraq of much needed funds for post-war reconstructions.

What of particular interest is the Kuwaiti contention that the Saudis themselves had territorial ambitions.

In his cable, King Fahd invited the Kuwaiti crown prince to the Jeddah meeting. Addressing the Emir, he said: "As I look forward to this brotherly meeting (between the Iraqis and the Kuwaitis), I am fully confident that with your wisdom and insight and God's blessing we will accomplish what we and your Arab brothers look for, easing the difficulties, clearing all the hurdles and reforming the borderly bonds between the two countries."

Foreign Minister Sabah Ahmad Al Jaber Al Sabah of Kuwait was to arrive Wednesday for a meeting Thursday with President Gorbachev and Foreign Minister Alexander Lebedev.

Mr. Gorbachev and Sheikh Al Sabah were expected to discuss peace efforts, Kuwaiti diplomat Abdul Ameer A. Ramadan said. He offered no details.

Mr. Primakov arrived in Iran Wednesday to brief Iranian leaders on his mission to Iraq. The national Iranian news agency IRNA said Mr. Primakov arrived at the Western border crossing of Khosravi after travelling by road from Baghdad.

President Saddam told the envoy Tuesday he was willing to cooperate with the Soviet Union in seeking an end to the Gulf war but no mention was made of a possible Iraqi withdrawal from Kuwait.

"Iraq is prepared to extend cooperation to the Soviet Union and other nations and agencies in the interest of finding a peaceful, political, equitable and honourable solution to the region's central issues, including the situation in the Gulf," President Saddam said.

Aziz

(Continued from page 1)

cautiously to the report that President Saddam was willing to

Jordan

(Continued from page 1)

and Islamic states, civilised countries and human right and peace organisations as well as the United Nations and its secretary general to condemn this unforgivable crime, and to work to stop the brutal bombing... that does not distinguish between civilians and soldiers," the statement said. It added this bombardment "even targets civilians in their shelters and those fleeing war in buses and cars."

The spokesman called on all world bodies and organisations to denounce "those inhuman and brutal crimes, and were prepared and carried out in a manner that constitutes a flagrant deviation from the U.N. resolutions, principles and charters, and to reveal the lies claiming the allies are only targeting military locations."

As the Jordanian government condemns this massacre and views it as a clear evidence of the goals of the allied forces to destroy Iraq and its people's achievements, it also affirms that these criminal acts aim at blocking all paths leading towards the just peace we are pursuing, which is the main objective and sublime mission on which the U.N. is based," the spokesman added.

The Royal Court and the government declared three days of mourning for the victims of the massacre.

Jordan is sad and very angry over the killing and sees it as another manifestation of the gravity and cruelty of war, senior officials said.

"In solidarity with the Arab and Muslim Iraqi people in their steadfastness in the face of the unjust aggression carried out by the allied forces and in sympathy with the hundreds of families which have lost dear members, old people, women and children as a result of the savage air raid Wednesday morning, the Hashemite Kingdom of Jordan

announces a three-day mourning period starting Thursday, Feb. 14, 1991, over the killing of innocent people," a statement issued by Prime Minister Mudar Badran said.

Mr. Badran ordered flags lowered over official institutions and departments during the mourning period.

"What has happened is sad and makes us very angry," said Information Minister Ibrahim Izzeddine. "If anyone wants a visual image of the sadness of war this is it," he told the Jordan Times.

"What has happened has highlighted what we in Jordan have been saying for days, weeks and months about the gravity and cruelty of war," the minister said. It is exactly because of the possibility of such events that Jordan "has been trying to avert war and now is trying to stop the bombing," he said.

The pictures and images of children and women, charred beyond recognition, which were transmitted to the public Wednesday, the minister said, "prove that civilians are killed as a result of allied bombardment of Baghdad, not strategic military targets."

"All Arabes and Muslims are angry today... it has to stop."

Massacre

(Continued from page 1)

were suffering from various burns. "Look at him. He's the only one alive of my family," said Karim Mohammad. His son, Abdullah, lay unconscious on a bed at Yarmuk hospital, fighting for his life. Doctors said Abdullah, in his early teens, was suffering from severe burns to his face and head. Doctors said if he survives at all, he will be blind for the rest of his life.

Mr. Mohammad, a lawyer, said he had sent his wife, two daughters and son to the shelter and stayed at home. The raids escalated, and he was waiting for a half so he could run down the street to join them. But the shelter was hit before he was able to reach them.

Omar Adnan, a 17-year-old survi-

vor, said his three younger sisters, mother and father, all perished.

In a faint voice, he said: "I was sleeping and suddenly I felt heat and the blanket was burning. Moments later, I felt I was suffocating."

"I tried to try and touch my mother who was next to me but grabbed nothing but a piece of flesh," he said.

There were no military installations anywhere near the Al Ameriah shelter. Several large arrows with the word shelter written on them in Arabic and English pointed to the facility. The shelter is situated in the heart of the neighbourhood, surrounded by a nursery school, a supermarket, a mosque and a cluster of single-storey homes.

It was not clear what the aircraft were aiming at when they fired their missiles.

The type of the missile and the nationality of the aircraft that fired them could not be determined as it was still dark when the jets struck. In Riyadh, a U.S. military spokesman contended that the shelter was a military bunker.

"I am here to tell you that it was a military command-and-control facility," Brigadier General Richard Neal told a news briefing.

"I have no idea why there were civilians in the bunker at 0040 in the morning... it belies logic," he said. "We don't feel like we attacked the wrong bunker or made a mistake. We feel very comfortable that the attack was a legitimate target..." he added.

A British military spokesman in the Gulf said the bombing of the shelter was not intended by the U.S.-led coalition.

Group Captain Nial Irving told Britain's Independent Television Wednesday: "If it's true it certainly wasn't intended."

Told by his interviewer that film of women and children casualties had been screened, Capt. Irving said: "In that case it obviously is a tragedy and something did go wrong."

The White House said later the bunker was a well-known military target and claimed that Iraq placed civilians there on purpose.

"We don't know why civilians were at this location. But we do know that Saddam Hussein does not share our sanctity for human life," spokesman Martin Fitzwater told reporters.

The raid on the bunker was one of the deadliest of the month-old war and increased controversy over

whether the allies were exceeding U.N. Security Council Resolution 678 empowering them to use "all necessary means" to drive Iraq from Kuwait.

The manager of the shelter at Al Ameriah told reporters: "We didn't have a single military man in the shelter... it is allocated to civilians."

Health Minister Saeed said intense heat hampered efforts by civil defence teams to reach hundreds of people trapped inside.

He said there were no military targets in the area and said: "This was a criminal, premeditated, pre-planned attack against civilians."

The Defence Department sought to justify its repeated bombing of bridges, railroads and other targets that it considers military in nature but whose destruction also disrupts civilian life.

Thomas Kelly, director of operations for the joint chiefs of staff, said at a news briefing that the bridges are key choke points since Iraq is divided by two major rivers, the Tigris and the Euphrates.

Damaged bridges snarl convoys, creating easy targets for allied aircraft, General Kelly said.

Scud launchers "intact"

Iraq said Tuesday its Scud missile launchers returned safely to their bases after attacking Israel and Saudi Arabia overnight.

Military communiqué number 45 broadcast over Baghdad Radio said "after directing their blows to Tel Aviv and... Riyadh... our missile launchers returned safely to base."

U.S. military sources Tuesday said allied aircraft attacked Scud missile launchers in western Iraq and four were possibly destroyed.

Iraq will continue to launch Scud missile attacks against Israel and Saudi Arabia, Iraqi Vice-Premier Saeed Maimari said in Algeria.

Dr. Hammadi did not elaborate on his statement.

Oil fires

More than 50 oil field fires are burning in Kuwait, either set ablaze by Iraqi forces or by errant allied bombs, Defence Department officials said.

Admiral Mike McConnell said "in excess of 50 oil field fires" had been burning in Kuwait for a week or more and that most of them had been lit by Iraqi forces to help conceal their troop positions from allied aircraft.

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Jordan Times

JORDAN MARKET PLACE

Economy

U.S. bankers unveil scheme to rescue insurance fund

WASHINGTON (R) — U.S. bankers unveiled a \$10 billion plan Tuesday to beef up the shrinking bank deposit insurance fund without using taxpayers' money, but the proposals came under swift attack in Congress.

The proposal calls for the Federal Deposit Insurance Corp (FDIC) to borrow up to \$10 billion from the troubled industry to provide more cash for the fund. It protects depositors in insolvent banks.

Under the proposal, the banking industry would buy U.S. bonds issued by the FDIC to support the bank fund.

The banks, however, would also cover the interest and principal payments on the bonds through a special annual charge of three cents to four cents per \$100 of

BIS sees marginal impact on claims against Iraq, Kuwait

BASLE, Switzerland (R) — The Gulf crisis had only a marginal impact on Western bank claims against Iraq and Kuwait in the third quarter of 1990, despite a severe disruption in business with the two countries, the West's leading central bank agency said Thursday.

The Bank for International Settlements (BIS) said in a report that outstanding claims on Iraq by Western banks fell \$187 million to \$8.73 billion during the period.

But outstanding claims on Kuwait rose by \$235 million to \$8.28 billion.

The BIS, which serves as a forum for meetings of Western central bank governors, said an international bank agreement to

Saudi Arabia seeks foreign loan to help cover war costs

RIYADH (R) — Saudi Arabia wants to borrow more than \$3 billion from foreign banks to help cover spiralling Gulf war costs and falling oil revenues, diplomats and bankers said Wednesday.

"They've got a problem coming up with cash and have got to find the money really quickly," one senior Western economist said.

Details of the kingdom's effort to raise its first major overseas loan since the oil boom could not be confirmed. But Saudi-based bankers said the Saudi Arabian Monetary Agency (SAMA) was negotiating a three-year loan of \$3.5 to \$3.6 billion with a group of nine foreign banks.

SAMA was understood to have agreed to an interest rate of half a percentage point above the London Inter Bank Offered Rate (LIBOR) — very high for a loan to a government, bankers said.

Saudi officials said they could not comment on the reports. The

topic is sensitive for the conservative Muslim state because payment or receipt of interest is banned under Islamic law.

But economists said Saudi Arabia, the world's biggest oil exporter, was being forced to borrow abroad to ease cash flow problems caused by the enormous financial burden of the war.

The kingdom already borrows up to 36 billion riyals (\$9.6 billion) a year from domestic banks through issuing government "development" bonds.

Emergency spending after Iraq's invasion of Kuwait more than doubled Saudi Arabia's projected 1990 budget deficit of \$6.7 billion, bankers and economists said.

Total war costs are impossible to predict but diplomats say Saudi Arabia has already spent or pledged a total of \$48 billion — roughly half of its gross domestic product and far more than what it was expected to earn from oil this year.

Saudi Arabia postponed announcing its 1991 budget last December because of difficulties in projecting war costs and oil revenues, which account for more than 60 per cent of its income.

The Saudi government is paying fuel, food, and housing expenses for all the allied forces on its soil.

It pledged \$13.5 billion to Washington for the first three months of this year alone, diplomats said.

"The British are also tapping at the till and the French are not far behind," said one.

Riyadh gave billions of dollars to countries like Egypt, Syria and Turkey whose economies have been hit by the war.

It has also spent huge sums on boosting its own defences, supporting Kuwaiti refugees, and raising its oil output to help compensate world markets for the loss of Kuwaiti and Iraqi crude.

Government officials said

Tuesday the cost of fighting a giant oil slick lapping on the kingdom's Gulf coast would be around \$1 billion over the next six months.

"Costs now are much greater than projected. To find that money now while oil prices are dropping will be difficult," one economist said.

Crude prices have dropped by around \$10 to an average of \$20 per barrel since the war began and are expected to fall further as demand slackens with the end of the northern hemisphere winter.

Bankers said SAMA began negotiating with the banks, including the U.S. giant Morgan Guaranty, about two weeks ago. They did not know whether an agreement had been signed.

SAMA initially asked for a seven-year loan to string repayments out for as long as possible, but was believed to have settled for a three-year loan, the bankers said.

British Airways suffers 72% profit drop, expects large operating losses

LONDON (R) — British Airways (B.A.) said Tuesday its third quarter pre-tax profit plunged 72 per cent and, because of the recession in key markets and the Gulf war, it expected substantial operating losses in the current final quarter.

Pre-tax profits slumped to £20 million (\$40 million) in the quarter ended on Dec. 31 from £71 million (\$142 million) in the same period of 1989-90.

At the same time turnover edged up to £1.24 billion (\$2.4 billion) from £1.2 billion (\$2.3 billion).

B.A. said it expected losses in the January-to-March period because of a sharp drop in air traffic. Bookings have fallen 20 per cent since the Gulf war broke out on Jan. 17.

The falling demand has sparked a trans-Atlantic fare war and this is threatening further financial woes in an industry already beset by plunging profits and rising staff layoffs.

"The combined effect of the Gulf war... worldwide recession led by the U.S. and the new competitive challenges lying ahead, indicate the next financial year will be difficult," B.A. Chairman Lord King said in a statement accompanying the quarterly results.

Reflecting the slump, the airline cancelled delivery of five medium to long range Boeing 767 aircraft it had planned to have in its fleet this year. On Monday it had said it would eliminate 4,600 jobs worldwide and put 2,000 other staff on half pay.

Widespread fear of travel has had a dramatic impact on the airline industry worldwide. The stay-at-home trend has become even more troubling recently as business travellers have joined tourists in avoiding international flights.

"The decline is in the high-yielding sections — business class, first class and (super) Concorde," Lehman Brothers analyst Christopher Will said.

B.A.'s King said: "It is clear that there will be a substantial operating loss in the fourth quarter, but vigorous action has been taken to mitigate the effects of the downturn in traffic."

Moving to shore up its competitive position, B.A. cut its New York to London return 30-

Britain cuts interest rate as economic slump looms

LONDON (R) — Britain's Conservative government shaved its inflation-busting interest rates Wednesday, but critics said the economy faced a slump and called the cut of half a percentage point too little and too late.

The Bank of England, the British central bank, signalled that bank base lending rates should be cut half a percentage point to 13.5 per cent when it cut its money market lending rate by that margin. Commercial banks quickly acted on the cue.

But opposition Labour Party leader Neil Kinnock said the cut was overdue and that "more must be done to stop the slump."

Rates had been kept at 14 per cent since October after 15 per cent in the preceding year in a battle against inflation.

The price is being paid with a business recession marked by a record number of bankruptcies — 50 a day last autumn — growing unemployment and deeply unpopular rises in mortgage repayments.

Prime Minister John Major has been riding high in the opinion polls because of his handling of the Gulf war, in which Britain has deployed more than 40,000 troops.

But Major, who succeeded Margaret Thatcher less than three months ago, must call a general election no later than mid-1992 and his Conservatives look vulnerable on the economy.

Inflation is now easing — figures for January due Friday may show it at around nine per cent from a peak of nearly 11 per cent last year.

But entry into the European exchange rate mechanism (ERM) last October has made it hard to cut interest rates. Too rapid a drop may send hot money out of the pound sterling, weaken it against the mark and upset parties in the currency grid.

Britain's ERM entry was part of the anti-inflation policy. The system rules out devaluation as an

option to rescue firms that price themselves off the export market because they give in to exorbitant trade union pay claims.

But critics point out that ERM membership also forces Britain to keep taking the interest rate medicine — with its grim, recessionary side effects — even as inflation falls.

One critic is Professor Alan Walters, Thatcher's economic adviser, who said the economy was "half baked" and who embarrassed Major Wednesday by joining other economists in a letter to the Times newspaper urging an interest rate cut.

They said high borrowing costs had led loan losses that weakened the banking system and it was "just such monetary problems which caused the Great Depression of the 1930s."

Walters in comment later Wednesday also joined in calling the bank lending rate cuts "too little and for too late."

Abbey National Building Soci-

ety, the second biggest mortgage lender, said it was not enough to allow a cut in mortgage rates.

But some financial analysts said the government left itself room for a further bank lending rate cut of half a percentage point when it brings in its annual budget on March 19.

This would accord with a policy of bringing rates down gradually, as inflation falls and in a way that "does not shock currency markets."

Spain, another member of the ERM, also shaved its interest rates earlier Wednesday, facilitating the British move.

The pound gained value slightly against both the mark and the dollar on the foreign exchanges after the Bank of England acted. Dealers said the measure ended uncertainty.

"Parliament was to debate the economy later Wednesday and the Labour opposition taunted the government, saying it had acted only to spare itself embarrassment in the debate."

AMMAN EXCHANGE RATES		
Wednesday, February 13, 1991		
Central Bank official rate		
U.S. dollar	662.0	666.0
Pound Sterling	1318.8	1326.7
Deutschemark	455.2	457.9
Swiss franc	331.1	334.3
French franc	138.4	139.4
Japanese yen (per 100)	241.1	241.2
Dutch guilder	403.8	404.2
Swedish crown	121.1	121.2
Italian lira (for 100)	60.3	60.9
Belgian franc (for 10)	221.3	222.6

WORLD STOCK MARKETS	
Reuters	
SYDNEY — The release of higher-than-expected inflation figures wiped out a tentative gain on the market and sent it to a weaker close. The All Ordinaries closed 6.7 points lower at 1,378.2.	
TOKYO — The Nikkei closed above 25,000 for the first time since October 31 last year after stocks absorbed bouts of profit-taking. The index rose 204.46 points or 0.82 per cent to 25,139.47.	
HONG KONG — Stocks ended firmer as light but persistent bargain-hunting offset early profit-taking. The Hang Seng index rose 17.66 points to 3,412.66.	
SINGAPORE — Prices rebounded strongly on bargain hunting. The Straits Times recovered from a midday 8.29-point fall to close 4.41 points higher at 1,323.25.	
BOMBAY — Prices fell on nervousness over the budget due at the end of the month. The Bombay Stock Exchange Index fell 8.56 points to 1,004.94 and the National Index 2.34 to 515.85.	
FRANKFURT — Prices expanded their early gains to close broadly firmer, boosted by buy orders from domestic privately-held investment funds and from abroad. The Dax Index ended up 20.47 at 1,489.41.	
ZURICH — The market closed more than one per cent firmer in moderate trading at new highs for the year after wall street's firm opening prompted a late rally. The all-share SPI Index closed up 11.4 at 982.8.	
PARIS — The market finished an active session with modest gains. Institutional investors coming on a quick end to the economic slowdown snapped up cyclical stocks that have suffered in recent weeks. The CAC-40 Index finished up 9.60 at 1,635.84.	

LONDON EXCHANGE RATES		
LONDON (R) — Following are the buying and selling rates for leading world currencies and gold against the dollar at midsession on the London foreign exchange and bullion markets Wednesday.		
One Sterling	1.9917/27	U.S. dollar
One U.S. dollar	1.1525/35	Canadian dollar
	1.4568/75	Deutschemark
	1.6410/20	Dutch guilders
	1.2478/85	Swiss francs
	30.0005	Belgian francs
	4.9625/75	French francs
	1095/1096	Italian lire
	126.85/95	Japanese yen
	5.4720/70	Swedish crowns
	5.7020/70	Norwegian crowns
	5.6040/90	Danish crowns
One ounce of gold	366.40/366.90	U.S. dollars

Air France prolongs fare cuts on U.S. routes

PARIS (R) — French state-owned airline Air France said Tuesday it would extend until April 30 reductions on fares on its Paris-New York and Paris-Miami routes.

A company spokesman said the reduced fares, announced in January and originally scheduled to end on March 17, have been extended because of the difficult economic climate facing the airline industry.

Under the programme, the roundtrip fare from Paris to New York is 2,995 French francs (\$607) and the Paris-Miami round trip costs 3,700 francs (\$747), he said.

"The economic climate is difficult and we are maintaining the promotion to maintain demand," the spokesman said.

British Airways PLC opened the flood gates for a fare war Sunday, slashing one-third off some of its trans-Atlantic fares after a slump in passenger numbers due to Gulf war-related threats of guerrilla attacks.

It was promptly followed by Deutsche Luftansa A.G. and U.S. carriers, Pan Am Corp and Trans World Airlines. Other European and U.S. carriers are talking of following suit.

The reduced Air France fares are subject to restrictions, including a minimum stay of seven days, a maximum stay of 21 days and purchase and reservation at least 14 days before departure. They cannot be changed or refunded after purchase.

Bonn tries to stave off disaster in eastern Germany

BONN (R) — The German government, alarmed by the accelerating collapse of the economy of former East Germany, announced a series of measures Tuesday to try to stave off disaster.

Economics Minister Jurgens Moellmann acknowledged Bonn had underestimated the crisis in the east and proposed a 10-point emergency aid programme that would cost an extra 10 billion marks (\$6.9 billion) a year if adopted.

Chancellor Helmut Kohl agreed with top union leaders and employers to combat massive unemployment in the east by doubling from the present 130,000 the number of jobs created by public works projects.

At a meeting, he told them support for the five new states carved out of former East Germany was his government's top priority, government spokesman Dieter Vogel said.

Moellmann said the collapse of trade within Eastern Europe, which the government had not been able to predict, had exacerbated structural weaknesses in east Germany's economy.

Moellmann's 10-point plan includes concrete measures to stimulate investment, modernise infrastructure and create new

jobs. It will be discussed at a meeting of Kohl's centre-right coalition Thursday.

A key issue will be how to raise the billions of marks of extra aid needed in the east. Kohl ruled out tax increases to finance unification ahead of elections last December, but he was careful not to exclude them for other purposes.

Moellmann repeated that the government would need to raise taxes to finance higher aid for eastern Germany, the allied war effort in the Gulf and Eastern Europe.

But he said he would press for any tax rise to be coupled with a 10 per cent across-the-board subsidy cut in the West.

The tax rises could be included in the 1991 budget due to be presented on Feb. 20 but a supplementary budget might be needed. A final decision on tax rises is due in May at the latest.

Lev Voronin, first vice president of the Soviet Council of Ministers, said Paris was offering Moscow two billion francs (\$400 million) of credit to buy French capital goods.

Voronin said Moscow also agreed to buy two to three million tonnes of French grain with about one billion francs (\$200 million) of French credit guarantees.

"The problem in the Baltics is not linked to traditional economic and commercial cooperation," Beregovoy said.

Last year Moscow used an unlimited line of French credit to buy 1.2 billion francs (\$250 million) worth of French capital goods, Beregovoy said.

Beregovoy and Voronin said they were disappointed about bilateral trade. The French trade deficit with the Soviet Union widened to 10 billion francs (\$2

Paris offers Moscow \$600m credit

PARIS (R) — France, brushing aside calls to punish Moscow for its crackdown in the Baltic republics, offered the Soviet Union three billion francs (\$600 million) of credit Tuesday to buy French factory equipment and grain.

Unveiling the aid package, French Finance Minister Pierre Beregovoy said France deplored the recent use of force in the Baltic republics but added that internal tensions should not impede trade between the countries.

Beregovoy told reporters at the end of two days of meetings with

Two years ago state-owned Thomson agreed to manufacture 600,000 colour television sets per year in the Soviet Union. Voronin said he expected production to begin in 1992.

Last December, Seribo said it signed a contract with the Soviet Union to provide 560 million francs (\$115 million) of equipment and technical assistance. Other details on the Thomson and Seribo projects were unavailable.

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LAMBADA

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Russian deputy premier quits, stresses anti-reformist plot

MOSCOW (R) — Gennady Filshin, reformist deputy premier of the Russian Federation, resigned Wednesday saying he was victim of a campaign to undermine the republic's liberal leadership.

The resignation of Filshin, a radical economist closely associated with the now-abandoned "500 days" programme for Soviet economic recovery, was announced by the Federation's Radio Rossiya and confirmed by one of his aides.

In his resignation letter quoted by the radio, Filshin said he believed "special services" — a clear reference to the KGB intelligence organisation — and old-style Soviet officials were working to discredit Russian leader Boris Yeltsin.

"Today, I am no longer able to carry out the duties of my office in accordance with its requirements and am forced to waste much time in explaining obvious truths and disavowing unfounded, crude attacks," the letter said.

Russian Prime Minister Ivan Silayev, to whom the letter was addressed, last week told the Russian parliament where radicals and liberals hold a slim majority that the Communist Party and

KGB had begun "a witch-hunt" against his government.

Filshin's resignation came the day after Soviet Prime Minister Valentin Pavlov said some Western and Soviet bankers had attempted to stage a financial coup last month to oust President Mikhail Gorbachev.

Over the past three weeks, newspapers expressing the views of the hard-line Russian Communist Party have accused Filshin of involvement in a deal with a British-based trading company which the Soviet state bank has declared illegal.

Filshin denied any wrongdoing in the deal, under which the company, Dove Trading International, would have imported vast quantities of scarce consumer goods for sale in the Soviet Union for roubles.

The roubles — a currency which is not freely convertible — would have later been used to purchase Soviet property and industrial plant as the country moved towards a market economic system, according to Soviet press reports.

In his Tuesday remarks alleging an attempted coup against Gorbachev, Pavlov indicated this deal could have been part of

moves against the Kremlin leader — who denies radical charges that he is swinging back towards authoritarian rule.

Meanwhile President Mikhail Gorbachev Tuesday rejected suggestions that he had turned sharply to the right in his policies and virtually halted his perestroika reform programme.

TASS said in a report on Gorbachev's talks with visiting French Foreign Minister Roland Dumas.

"The president became sharp and critical over recent suspicions and inventions which would have it that the Soviet leadership had changed its policies, was rejecting reform or returning to totalitarianism."

The agency said that during their two-and-a-quarter hours of talks Dumas was presented with evidence showing the extent of the crisis faced by Gorbachev and his new government team.

Pro-reform political and academic figures have accused Gorbachev in recent months of moving sharply to the right, citing rejection of radical economic reforms and increasing reliance on the security forces.

Many commentators have

pointed to violence in the Baltic region last month as evidence that Gorbachev's liberal policies were at, or nearing, an end.

Gorbachev, TASS said, had dismissed many Western interpretations as biased and superficial and likely to harm East-West relations.

In a separate development, Former Soviet Foreign Minister Eduard Shevardnadze said Tuesday his troubled country's reform process appeared doomed but could still be rescued if democracy-minded citizens joined forces.

Asked in a German television interview if perestroika was finished because of economic collapse and ethnic unrest, Shevardnadze replied: "If I'm going to be really open and honest, this kind of change appears to be looming."

"But I think perestroika and new political ideas can be saved if our society really wants it, if democratically-inclined people join forces," he added.

The ZDF television network said it was Shevardnadze's first foreign media interview since he abruptly resigned in December in protest at what he called creeping dictatorship.

Warsaw Pact military chief has no regrets as end nears

BRUSSELS (R) — The Warsaw Pact's chief of staff, unbowed by the coming break-up of his command, said Wednesday he had fulfilled his duty with "flying colours" and the military alliance had served a humane purpose by preventing war.

Soviet General Vladimir Lobov told Reuters in an interview that the agreement, announced in Moscow Tuesday, to scrap the six-nation Pact's military structure by April was "timely."

Lobov predicted that NATO, his former cold war foe, would be forced to do the same.

"I believe that I have accomplished the tasks entrusted to me," he said, speaking through an interpreter.

"I have done my duty. I am leaving my position with flying colours and very calmly."

Lobov, a stocky, vigorous figure regarded as a political conservative, was in Brussels as part of a Soviet parliamentary delegation visiting the North Atlantic assembly, which groups NATO parliamentarians.

Dressed in a grey suit rather than military uniform, he was due to meet NATO Secretary-General Manfred Woerner and the Western alliance's top commander in Europe, U.S. General John Galvin, later Wednesday.

He flatly denied suggestions that the Soviet-led Warsaw Pact, founded in 1955, was a vehicle for ideological domination of Eastern Europe by Moscow and a major cause of East-West confrontation.

"The objective... of the Warsaw Pact was a very humane purpose... making sure that there would be no war. I do believe that throughout its life, the Warsaw Pact has played an important role in ensuring precisely that objective," he said.

"I will perhaps agree if you say that certain mistakes have been made, there have been certain drawbacks."

Asked what these were, he replied only: "This is a shopworn phrase, an old subject."

The Pact's political structure would continue to function "as long as the member states believe it necessary," he added.

Lobov, 55, has been Warsaw Pact chief of staff for two years. During that time, he has had to watch Moscow's former Eastern European satellites kick out their hardline Communist governments and ask Soviet forces to leave.

East Germany, once Moscow's staunchest ally, even became part of NATO last year after being absorbed into West Germany.

Joint command structures of the Warsaw Pact have not met for months and its troops have not exercised since 1989. Some member-states have threatened to leave unilaterally unless the alliance is wound up soon.

The Pact — which now includes the Soviet Union, Romania, Poland, Hungary, Czechoslovakia and Bulgaria — was established as a response to NATO, which Lobov accused of starting the cold war when it was set up in 1949.

Lobov said Soviet President Mikhail Gorbachev's reform programme and "initiatives" taken by Warsaw Pact members had been responsible for the improved international climate and the end of the cold war.

The new situation in Europe would also mean the end for NATO's military apparatus "sooner or later," he said.

But the 16-nation Western alliance has rejected any comparison with the Warsaw Pact, saying it has always been an alliance of "free and sovereign nations" and that it will continue to protect the security of its members.

"The only thing I'm sorry about is that NATO leaders have not demonstrated the wisdom and statesmanship that has been demonstrated by the Warsaw Pact leaders," Lobov said.

"Ask Galvin and Woerner when they are going to disband their organisation."

NATO, faced with imminent demise of its cold war foe, reacted with apparent indifference Tuesday to news that the Warsaw Pact's military structure would be scrapped by April.

"It's up to the member states of the Warsaw treaty organisation to decide on their own future security policy and the relevance of the (Pact) in this regard," a NATO spokesman said.

Column 8

Bakker's sentence overturned

RICHMOND, Virginia (R) — U.S. Television Evangelist Jim Bakker's 45-year prison sentence for fraud was overturned on grounds the federal judge who sentenced him may have been biased.

The three judges of the 4th U.S. Circuit Court of Appeals in Richmond upheld Bakker's convictions on 24 counts of fraud, mail fraud and conspiracy.

But they said that the sentencing judge, Robert Potter of Charlotte, North Carolina, abused discretion and violated Bakker's rights with his remarks at sentencing. The appeals court said Bakker would be re-sentenced by a different judge.

Bakker, founder of the PTL television network, was sentenced to the prison term and fined \$300,000 for defrauding followers who bought partnerships in PTL's Heritage USA vacation park in Fort Mill, South Carolina.

At the sentencing hearing, Potter said Bakker "hadn't thought whatever about his victims and those of us who do have a religion are ridiculed as being saps (for) money-grubbing preachers or priests."

The appeals court said trial judges cannot punish defendants for offending their personal religious beliefs.

Parrot could become jail bird

OSLO (R) — A screeching parrot accused of making the noise which led to the arrest of a Norwegian man in a trial in Norway this week in an unprecedented court case which could bring a long spell of solitary confinement.

Jokko, a blue and white parrot aged about 50, has usually silent as a magpie.

Lawyers and witnesses turned up at the bird's Oslo home for the start of the trial. The court moved to the house as it was too cold for Jokko to travel.

"My wife was taken to hospital after a heart attack. I reckon one of the reasons for her illness was the parrot's noise and the neighbours' provocations," Norwegian newspapers quoted neighbour Frank Andersen as testifying.

Andersen said Jokko's squawking was like "daggers in the stomach." He wants the parrot to leave or be locked in a back room.

Jokko's owner, Jan Erik Skog, denied the Andersen family's charges that he spied on them and deliberately put the parrot outside to annoy them in summer. The case was due to continue on with testimony from up to 20 witnesses.

Historic E. German film studio to be rescued

BERLIN (R) — The DEFA film complex, which churned out ideologically slanted films during its 40 years as East Germany's state studio, will be rescued from bankruptcy, government officials said Monday.

Brandenburg State Culture Minister Hinrich Enderlein said the authorities intended to save the decaying studio possibly by converting it into a holding company. "Preserving DEFA is not just a matter of jobs but also the cultural dimensions of filmmaking," Enderlein said while visiting the studio. He said the company would have various subsidiaries that would operate independently, sometimes with foreign investment. DEFA is now owned by the Treuhander Agency in charge of privatising 8,000 East German firms. The fall of communism in 1989 and subsequent rush to capitalist unity with West Germany stripped DEFA of 35 million marks (\$24 million) in vital annual subsidies. Film output plummeted last year and many staff were laid off.

Conference sources said Charles Taylor, the leader of the mainstream guerrilla group, was linking acceptance of the ceasefire agreement with reconstitution of the West African peacekeeping force in Liberia known as ECOMOG.

A ceasefire was agreed in principle but not signed during a peace summit in Mali last November. Subsequent talks to work out details of troop withdrawal and disarmament have made no progress.

The Lome meeting brought together the three warring Liberian parties, members of an interim government installed in Liberia under ECOMOG auspices and officials of nine West African states.

Many diplomats see the Lome summit as a last-ditch attempt to prevent a fresh outbreak of fighting in Africa's oldest independent republic, founded by freed American slaves.

Most participants made no comment at the end of the 10-hour talks, but conference sources said the conference would probably resume Wednesday morning.

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Albania pledges reforms, warns students

VIENNA (R) — Albania's communist leader Ramiz Alia warned the country's striking students he would not give in to their demands, but admitted that the country was facing an economic crisis, the Albanian News Agency (ATA) Wednesday.

In his first major speech since widespread unrest erupted in November, Alia admitted grave political and economic errors but said these could not be corrected by "gathering and gathering" in the squares and streets.

Alia told a rally in the southern town of Vlore Tuesday that radical changes demanded by the opposition would only lead to economic chaos, unemployment and poverty.

Most of the country's 10,000 students have been on strike for more than a week, calling for the

resignation of the government, the abolition of political indoctrination sessions and dropping the late Stalinist leader Enver Hoxha from the name of the country's main University in Tirana.

"No one group of people... has the moral right, even less so the legal right, to impose their will on all the people. This is not democratic, but undemocratic," Alia said of the student demands.

"We have achieved many achievements, but admitted that mistakes have been committed during his 40 years in power had brought the country to the verge of economic collapse."

"The economic situation is not good. There are many shortages on the market both in industrial consumer goods and agricultural

and dairy products and meat. There is unemployment and inflation too."

"One can speak without fear of a crisis situation," Alia told his audience, whom he addressed as "brothers and sisters" instead of the previously mandatory "comrades."

"We were hasty in the matter of small herds and personal farming plots," Alia said, referring to wholesale collectivisation of agriculture.

"We erred when we banned religious belief by law," he added.

In the mid-1960s Hoxha banned all forms of religion and proclaimed Albania the world's first atheist state. One of Alia's first reforms last December following student and popular unrest was to end the ban.

Yugoslav presidents hold 4th round of talks

BEGRAD (AP) — The presidents of Yugoslavia's six fractions republics met Wednesday for a fourth round of negotiations that so far have proved futile in resolving the future of this brittle federation.

The leaders of Slovenia and Croatia, facing fresh accusations from federal authorities over their independence drives, met Tuesday to coordinate strategy ahead of Wednesday's talks.

After the meeting, Croatian President Franjo Tudjman and Slovenian leader Milan Kucan said they may seek mediation by the United Nations or other countries to settle Yugoslavia's problems if the talks fail.

Croatia boycotted the third round last Friday. Slovenia walked out of the meeting because of an anti-Croatian rally orchestrated by Serbia's Communist authorities outside the talks in Belgrade.

On the same day, Slovenia announced formal steps to secede, citing the inability of the republics to find a way out of the political and ethnic crisis that has been building for the past decade.

Many Yugoslavs are growing weary of the tensions raised by each session of the talks.

"Yugoslavs are filled with fear and hope" every time the regional leaders meet, the daily newspaper Vecernje Novosti said Wednesday. "It would be the worst if this agony continues, no matter what the outcome of the talks."

Traditional ethnic and religious rivalries in Yugoslavia have been exacerbated by ideological rifts between Communist and non-Communist leaderships of individual republics.

Croatia and Slovenia advocate a loose confederation of sovereign states that would have complete control over their monetary, defence and economic policies.

Witnesses refuse to testify at Mandela trial

JOHANNESBURG (R) — Two witnesses at the kidnapping and assault trial of Winnie Mandela refused to give evidence Wednesday, saying they were frightened.

"I fear for my life," said Barend Mono, 21. "If I proceed to give evidence I don't know what will happen afterwards."

Earlier, Kenneth Kgase, 31, told the Rand Supreme Court in Johannesburg he was too scared to testify after a third prosecution witness, Gabriel Mekgwe, was kidnapped by unknown men from

the safety of a Soweto church hostel at the weekend.

"I am very, very scared," Kgase told Judge M.S. Stegmann. "As soon as the trial is over, there is no guarantee of any protection of any sort."

The judge said he would give a decision Thursday on whether the witnesses would be obliged to testify.

Mono and Kgase face jail terms if they refuse to obey the judge's order to enter the witness box. But Kgase's lawyer Paul Kennedy,

told the court even this would not persuade his client to speak out.

The refusal of the witnesses to speak out severely jeopardises the state case against Mandela, wife of African National Congress Deputy President Nelson Mandela, and her three co-accused.

Prosecutor Jan Swanepoel said that if his star witnesses dried up, he might be obliged to postpone the trial until May or June in an effort to find Mekgwe.

3 hurt in Hong Kong blast

HONG KONG (R) — Three people were injured when a parcel bomb exploded at a luxury hotel in Hong Kong Wednesday, but police ruled out the possibility of a terrorist attack.

"This is purely a criminal investigation. There are no other overtones or political implications whatsoever," police officer Neil McCabe told reporters.

The explosion took place in the Holiday Inn Golden Mile in the British colony's bustling Tsim Sha Tsui tourist district.

A locally-posted parcel addressed to a hotel employee blew up in the reception area when he opened it. He and a female receptionist, both Chinese, were badly burned. The third victim was

another male hotel employee.

"The man is in a big mess. His face is burned completely black and one of his eyes is just a red hole," said a 25-year-old British tourist who witnessed the blast.

He said the recipient of the parcel ran screaming towards the exit with his clothes on fire after the explosion. The woman next to him also suffered bad burns and half her hair was burned off.

Police said another suspected bomb turned out to be a bundle of magazines.

The American and British international schools in Hong Kong have received three bomb threats since the Gulf war began. No other incidents have been reported.

Grenade kills 2, injures 50 in Portugal

LISBON (R) — A grenade brought by a man wearing a Gulf war-style gas mask exploded at a crowded carnival dance party in a crowded Portugal early Wednesday, killing two people and wounding 50.

The Portuguese News Agency, LUSA, said 15 of the injured were in a serious condition. Two young women had their legs amputated.

The man who brought the grenade, 45-year-old aluminium factory owner Jaime Pinto, was one of those who died.

Lisbon Radio stations quoted relatives as saying Pinto had been dressing up as a soldier at carnival parties for years and just wanted to have fun. A local policeman quoted by LUSA described him as a peaceful man.

There was no immediate word from the police on how the grenade came to explode.

The owner of the Zodiac Dance Hall in Fehres, near Cantanhede, told Radio TSF that Pinto had been carrying a plastic gun and was wearing a mask "like those you see in the Gulf."

"I never let in anyone wearing a mask, so I said to him 'you have to take your mask off,'" she said.

"So he took it off and said 'don't you know me?' He seemed well-educated, cheerful, in a good mood," said the owner, who was not identified.

"He was carrying a weapon. I touched it and saw it was plastic, so I said you can go in."

Portuguese are fond of fancy dress parties at carnival, which precedes the 40-day fast of lent beginning on Ash Wednesday.

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U.S. hopes for tentative pact on Philippine bases

MANILA (R) — The United States and the Philippines Wednesday imposed a news blackout on negotiations on the future of American bases here after the U.S. side said it hoped to reach a tentative agreement by Friday.

"We're trying hard to conclude this by Friday. Believe me we're trying hard, but there's still a lot to be done," said U.S. spokesman Stanley Schrager.

After months of public wrangling, spokesmen for the two panels said they would not answer questions and would not make a fresh statement until Friday.

Asked if this was the final round of talks, Schrager told reporters: "We'll try to reach a tentative agreement on Friday. There's a lot of hard work. There's a lot to do."

The lease on the bases, which are helping resupply U.S. forces in the Gulf, expires in September

and the United States wants continued use of the facilities for another 10 years.

Negotiations began in September after an exploratory round last May, but got bogged down over how long U.S. forces could stay in the former American colony, how much Washington could pay and whose laws should apply to American troops.

U.S. chief negotiator Richard Armitage on arrival in Manila Sunday offered higher U.S. assistance in exchange for a longer phase-out of the bases, but said the United States could defend the Pacific region without any troops in the Philippines if necessary.

"Given the nature of these discussions, our mutual desire is to avoid speculation, and our desire to refrain from a piecemeal accounting of partial agreements, we are therefore not prepared to provide any additional information," a joint statement issued Wednesday by the two sides said.

Hospitals packed as cholera sweeps Peru

LIMA (R) — Beaches were deserted, hospitals overflowed and angry fishermen protested at restrictions on fish sales Tuesday as Peru's cholera epidemic struck another 2,500 people in one day.

At least 77 people have died in the outbreak so far, the Health Ministry reported, showing a low mortality rate as the bacterial disease swept the Peruvian coast where raw sewage gushes into the Pacific Ocean.

The number of cholera patients jumped from 8,566 on Monday to 11,085 in at least 12 cities, the ministry reported.

"This will stay out of control until people become aware of the need for better hygiene," said Health Ministry spokesman Raul Fernandez.

Health authorities warned people to avoid polluted beaches, boil drinking water for 10 minutes and carefully wash all fruits and vegetables.

Hundreds of fishermen, furious over a ban on sales of Ceviche, a popular dish made of raw fish,

marched through Lima to demand city hall lift the ban and end strictures against eating some kinds of seafood.

Shouting "fish is healthy" the protesters carried baskets full of fish and ate them in front of television cameras to show that there was no need to fear cholera.

Police have been arresting street vendors who sell the dish, said to be a cauldron of cholera.

Although most cooked fish was considered safe, fear of the epidemic has paralysed fishing fleets up and down the coast.

Lima's beaches were nearly deserted except for surfers, who claimed their wetsuits would shield them from cholera, and municipal inspectors who walked the shores telling sunbathers to stay away from the water.

Though easily treated, the disease has dehydrated and killed some of its victims in only a few hours, especially in shantytowns where sewers trickle down dirt streets and medical care is rare.

Neighbouring countries,

alarmed that the epidemic could spread across borders, have banned imports of Peruvian food and begun medical checks on people arriving from Peru.

The cholera epidemic in Peru is one of the most serious outbreaks of the disease in the last 30 years, according to U.S. Physicians familiar with the often-fatal illness.

The epidemic is part of an outbreak of cholera which began near Indonesia in 1961 and "has spread in concentric circles throughout the world," said Dr. Philip Brachman, a professor of public health at Emory University.

Brachman said he had not seen details of Peruvian medical investigations, but he said the pattern of infection indicates the disease is being spread by shellfish.

"Since it is apparently along the coastal areas, you would have to suspect shellfish," he told Reuters.

"Crabs and oysters filter water

for their food, so they filter out the cholera organism and it becomes concentrated in the oyster or crab," he added.

If a human eats an infected shellfish, the disease can develop rapidly, he said. Death from dehydration can follow in as quickly as three to four hours.

Dr. James Steinburg, assistant professor of medicine at Emory University, called the Peruvian epidemic "one of the worst outbreaks of cholera in this hemisphere in decades."

Cholera first became known in the West in the 15th century when Portuguese sailors saw